west virginia department of environmental protection

Division of Water and Waste Management
601 57th Street SE
Charleston, WV 25304
Phone: (304) 926-0495 / Fax: (304) 926-0463

Harold D. Ward, Cabinet Secretary
dep.wv.gov

May 10, 2024

Mr. Mike Kennett, Chairman
Mercer County Public Service District
241 Mercer Springs Road
Princeton, WV 24740

RE: Mercer County PSD
Rock District Regional Wastewater
Treatment and Collection System
Project
SRF No. C-544784
IJDC No. 2023S-2341

Dear Chairman Kennett:

Please find enclosed a copy of the Finding of No Significant Impact for the above referenced project. One copy should be placed in the PSD's office on the bulletin board and/or placed on the PSD's website. Another copy should be given to the local post office to be placed on their bulletin board.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Jesse Rupe, at (304) 926-0499, ext. 43784 or Jesse.Rupe@wv.gov.

Sincerely,

Katheryn Emery, P.E.
Engineering Chief
State Revolving Funds

KE/jar

cc: Jack Ramsey, P.E., E.L. Robinson Inc. (via e-mail)
Wayne Morgan, P.E., IJDC (via e-email)

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FNSI-WV-359

DATE: May 10, 2024

To All Interested Parties:

In accordance with the State regulations found in Title 47, Series 31, "State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund," the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection has performed an Environmental Review on the proposed project, as described below, and on the attached Environmental Assessment:

Mercer County PSD
Rock District
Regional Wastewater Treatment and Collection System Project
SRF No. C-544784

(Official Project Name and Number)

Mercer County Public Service District
241 Mercer Springs Road
Princeton, WV 24740

(Project Applicant)

Rock District, Mercer County, West Virginia

(Project Location, City, County, State)

$2,000,000

(Estimated State Revolving Fund Financial Share)

$14,436,500/$14,311,500

(Estimated Total Project Cost/Estimated Eligible Cost)

The review process indicated that either significant environmental impacts would not result from the proposed action or significant adverse impacts have been eliminated by making changes in the project. Consequently, a preliminary decision not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement has been made.

This action is taken on the basis of a careful review of the FNSI, and other supporting data. These documents are on file in the WVDEP office and are available for public review upon request. Additional copies of the Environmental Assessment will be made available, at cost, upon request.

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary decision may be submitted for consideration to the WVDEP. After evaluating the comments received, the Agency will make a final decision no sooner than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this Finding of No Significant Impact. No administrative action will be taken with respect to this proposal during this time frame.

Comments should be submitted to:

Katheryn Emery, P.E.
West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Water and Waste Management
State Revolving Fund Program
601 57th Street, S.E.
Charleston, WV 25304

Jeremy W. Bandy
Director

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
MERCER COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT
ROCK DISTRICT REGIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT AND COLLECTION SYSTEM PROJECT – PHASE 1A
SRF NO. 544784

I. Proposed Project

Mercer County PSD is located in central Mercer County, West Virginia (Exhibit 1). The Mercer County PSD currently only has one operating collection system and wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), and it is located in the Town of Matoaka. While this is the only existing system operated by the PSD within the project area, there are seven active treatment facilities within the project area. These plants are the PSD's Matoaka facility (NPDES WVG0024864), four privately owned mobile home park plants and two plants serving elementary schools. The proposed project will extend sewer service to the Rock District residents of the region and surrounding areas throughout the county. The project will be broken up into four main phases, with the possibility of main phases being broken down into smaller subphases to utilize the most beneficial funding available to the PSD and potential customers.

This project is the phase 1A of a multiphase project. Phase 1A will extend sewer service to Route 10 alongside Lashmeet to Lakebottom and portions of Lake Bottom, Kegley, and along Route 19 towards Spanishburg. It will also construct a new WWTP in the Lake Bottom area of Mercer County, the proposed work described below will encompass Phase 1A, which will provide sewer service to 76 customers, and will abandon two existing package treatment plants. It should also be noted that design costs and soft costs for Phases 1B and 1C are included in the Phase 1A project.

The new WWTP will utilize a sequencing batch reactor (SBR) with a capacity of 0.2 MGD (million gallon per day) and will be located in Lake Bottom. The treated and disinfected effluent will be discharged into the Bluestone River.

The new collection system in this project phase will utilize a conventional gravity and pressure system using various types and sizes of PVC pipe. This project phase will include the installation of 51 manholes, 4 lift stations, and 1 duplex grinder lift station.

The anticipated project costs and proposed funding sources are as follows:

Total Project Cost	$ 14,436,500.00
Total Construction Cost	$ 11,274,500.00
(WDA) EEGF Grant	$ 11,436,500.00
State Revolving Fund Principal Forgiveness Loan	$ 2,000,000.00
IJDC Grant	$ 1,000,000.00
Proposed Average Monthly Rate (3,400 gallons)	$ 83.14

II. Purpose and Need

There is no public sanitary sewer in the project area with the exception of the PSD's existing WWTP in Matoaka. The areas not served by the PSD use septic tanks or directly discharge into the environment. The existing WWTP in Matoaka has experienced issues for several years and received multiple Notice of Violations (NOV) from WVDEP. There are also six additional package plants in the project area that have also experienced issues and received NOVs from WVDEP. The County Health Department provided a letter documenting the issues with sewage disposal in the areas of Spanishburg, Lake Bottom, Kegley, Lashmeet, and Matoaka. The letter stated that septic effluent may flow directly to a nearby creek or the Bluestone River. With the completion of Phase I in its entirety, approximately 700 customers could be served and the existing Matoaka WWTP and five of the troubled package plants could be abandoned.

III. Existing Environment without the Project

Without this project Mercer County's Rock District will continue to experience detrimental environmental effects. Without an adequate treatment system in place, the wastewater discharge will continue to greatly affect the environment while also continuing to pose a serious health risk to the people.

IV. Evaluation of Alternatives

The PSD evaluated three methods for the collection system and five alternatives for the treatment of wastewater in the project area:

Collection Alternative 1: Conventional Gravity and Pressure System. This alternative will provide sanitary sewer service to the Rock District area and surrounding areas in Mercer County. Gravity flow will be utilized where possible but lift stations and force mains will also be used. The six existing package wastewater treatment plants will be abandoned, and the wastewater flows will be routed to a new 0.2 MGD WWTP to be constructed in Lake Bottom.

Collection Alternative 2: Vacuum Sewer System. Vacuum sewer system is best applied in areas with flat to gently rolling terrain, but in the project area, there are ground slopes up to and including 10%. This means a vacuum system is a less efficient option in comparison to alternative 1.

Collection Alternative 3: Doing nothing new and leaving the existing collection method in place is the last alternative. This will leave in place a singular and low area of effect system with the rest of the people in the project are without a collection system.

Treatment Alternative 1: The "No-Action" alternative will allow all of the WWTPs in the service area(s) to continue to operate without any additional modifications. It will not allow for extension of service to any new customers. This alternative is contingent upon all facilities meeting their current permit limits and future potential more stringent requirements related to plant effluent and sludge disposal.

Treatment Alternative 2: Construction of a Centralized WWTP. The new WWTP will be a 0.2 MGD sequencing batch reactor (SBR) located in Lake Bottom. This was selected due to its relatively small footprint and the fact that separate secondary clarifiers are not required. Common wall construction will be utilized to allow for easier expansion and increased capacity once all proposed future extensions are completed. The final design capacity of the WWTP will be 0.4 MGD once all flows are conveyed to the WWTP.

Treatment Alternative 3: Pump Sewer to the City of Princeton's WWTP. This alternative would require the construction of three additional lift stations and 26,900 feet of 12" force main.

Treatment Alternative 4: The use of decentralized systems throughout the project area. Because of the size and topography of the area, multiple WWTPs and collection systems would be required. The construction costs as well as O&M costs associated with the number of systems required would not be feasible. In addition, permitting and testing alone would be a financial burden on the utility.

After evaluation of the alternatives, it was determined that Collection Alternative 1 and Treatment Alternative 2 were the most cost effective and beneficial solution for Mercer County.

V. Environmental Consequences

The following factors were evaluated with respect to potential environmental impacts. The beneficial impacts of this project should far exceed any detrimental effects. A brief discussion of each factor is presented:

A. Air Quality: Possible short-term adverse impact associated with construction activities. These impacts will be minimized to the largest extent possible with proper construction practices.

B. Noise: Possible short-term adverse impact associated with construction activities. This impact will be mitigated with proper scheduling and equipment maintenance.

C. Endangered or Threatened Species: No anticipated impact. Mercer County PSD submitted a letter to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on May 11, 2022, to inform DNR of the project scope and request comments regarding the Endangered Species Act. The PSD received an official response to the letter on May 24, 2022. The letter from the DNR stated that their information shows no RTE species of sensitive habitats within the project area. It also stated that any concurrence requirements for federally listed species must come from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

D. Fish and Wildlife Resources: No anticipated impact. The Mercer County PSD sent a letter to US Fish and Wildlife (USFW) on May 11, 2022, to request a review of data on rare, threatened, and endangered species (RTE), and unique habitats that may be impacted by the proposed project. The Species List generated by USFW stated that there were no critical habitats and no refuge lands and no fish hatcheries under the USFWs jurisdiction within the project areas. The PSD received a letter from USFW on March 14, 2024. This letter stated that with the location and timing of the project, there are no concerns of impacts against the Gray Bat, Indiana

Bat, and Northern Long-eared Bat.

E. Wetlands/Floodplains: The elevation of the flood plain varies throughout the project area and the new collection system is not anticipated to have an impact on the flood plain. All new materials and components that will be susceptible to flood damage will be provided with the appropriate flood plain modifications. A letter was submitted to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on May 11, 2024, to request a review of wetlands in the project area. The PSD received a response on May 23, 2024. The USACE response requests the PSD to provide additional information concerning the presence and limits of potential waters of the United States, including wetlands, within the project area. This additional information will be provided by the completion of DA permit application form 6082. This FNSI is being conditioned upon receiving final clearance from the USACE regarding any potential impacts to wetlands. Coordination with the USACE must be completed prior to the approval of the plans and specifications.

F. Surface/Groundwater Resources: Possible short-term impact associated with construction activities. Any adverse impact should be mitigated by the contractor's compliance with an approved erosion and sediment control plan.

G. Excessive Energy Consumption: Energy saving equipment will be utilized for this project.

H. Sludge Disposal: No impact. Residuals Disposal: Disposal of primary sludge will be to the Mercer County landfill.

I. Loss of Prime Agricultural Land: Not a Significant Impact. A letter was sent to the United States Department of Agriculture - National Resources Conservation Service (USDA - NRCS) on May 11, 2022, to request a review of potential impacts to prime farmland in the project area. The PSD received an email response from NRCS on May 13, 2022, stating that it appears that this project does impact important farmland, and is therefore subject to the Farmland Protection Policy Act. The NRCS requested that the rest of the AD-1006 be completed. This form was completed and returned on February 19, 2024. NRCS found that the project area was below the threshold to recommend a new treatment plant location and that there would be no necessary mitigative measures needed.

J. Visual Effects and Community Amenities: Short-term visual and community impacts are anticipated when sewer construction takes place in community roadways. Required highway permits will ensure that proper safety measures are maintained within the work zones.

K. Socio-economic Considerations: The average user charge rates will be approximately $83.14/month based on a 3,400 gallons per month.

L. Historical or Archaeological Sites: A letter was sent to the West Virginia Division of Culture and History (WVDCH) on May 11, 2022, and requested review on historical artifacts. The PSD received a response from The Department of Culture and History on December 16, 2022, stating No Impact on Architectural Resource protected by the National Register of Historic Places, but the WVDCH is concerned about the possible presence of archeological sites and recommends a Phase I archeological survey be conducted. This FNSI is being conditioned upon

receiving final clearance from WVDCH regarding the project's archaeological impact. Coordination with the WCDCH must be completed prior to the approval of the plans and specifications.

M. Wild and Scenic Rivers: No anticipated impact. The proposed discharge into the Bluestone River will comply with the limits imposed by the NPDES permit. NPDES limits will be protective of water quality.

N. Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas: No impacts.

VI. Public Participation

The PSD held an advertised public meeting to discuss this project on February 1, 2024. There were no complaints made by the public in reference to the project.

VII. Conclusions

Based upon the Environmental Assessment, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection has concluded that this project is not expected to cause any adverse environmental impacts.

The conclusion is contingent upon comments and actions required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding impacts on United States waters and wetlands and any comments and actions that are required by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History regarding possible archaeological sites within the project area.

References

1. Facility Plan for the Mercer County Public Service District Rock District Regional Wastewater Treatment and Collection System Project, prepared by E.L. Robinson Inc. dated November 2022.
2. Department of Environmental Protection Facilities Plan and Environmental Checklist.

Input was provided from the following Federal/State/Local Agencies:

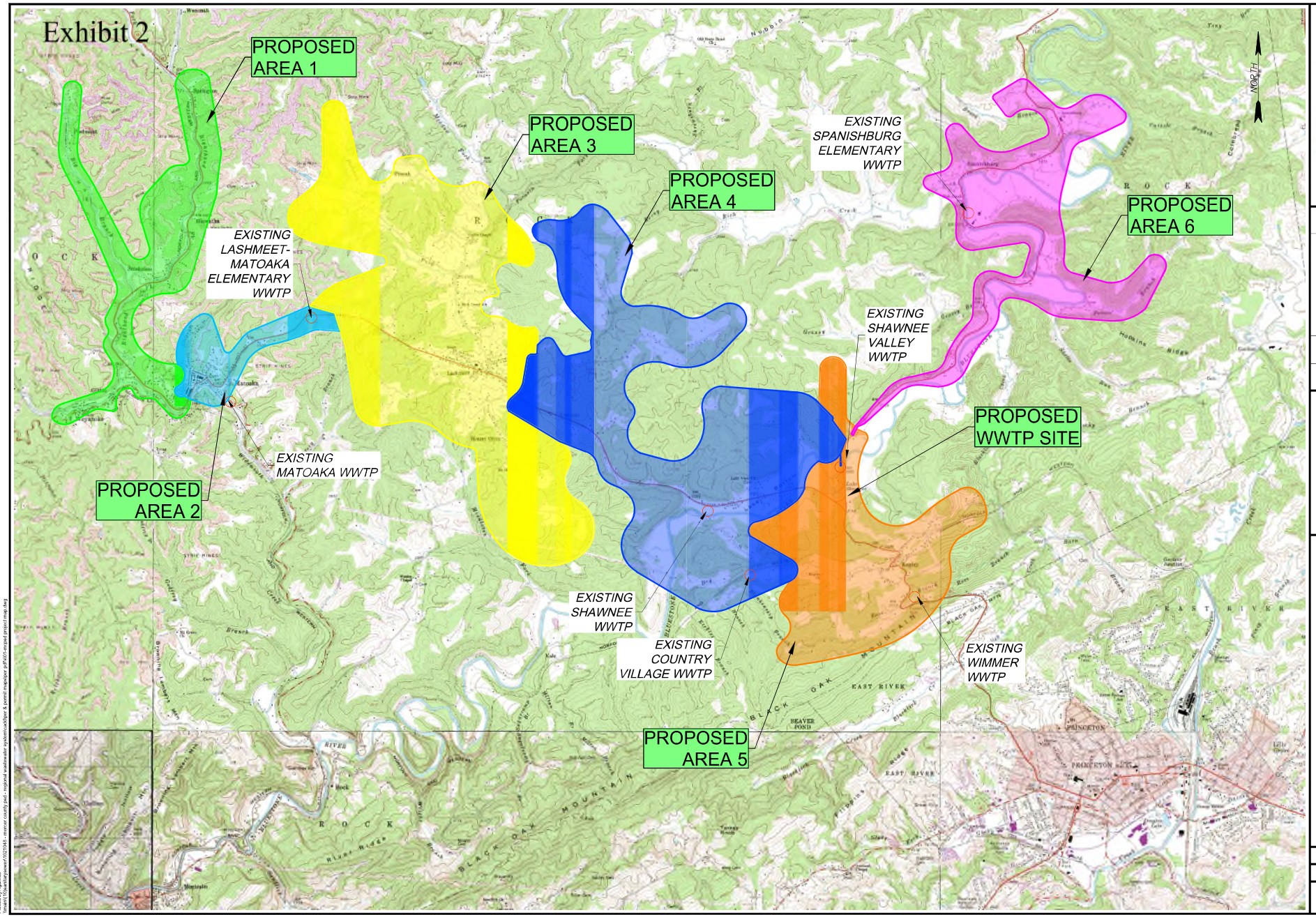
- U. S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
- West Virginia Division of Culture and History
- West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection
- West Virginia Department of Natural Resources

VIII. Attachments

1. Exhibit 1 – Project Location
2. Exhibit 2 – Project Area Map
3. Exhibit 3 – WWTP Location


HANCOCK
BROOKE
OHIO
MARSHALL
WETZEL
MONONGALIA
PLEASANTS
TYLER
MARION
PRESTON
MORGAN
BERKE-LEY
JEFFER-SON
MINERAL
HAMPSHIRE
DODD-RIDGE
HARRISON
TAYLOR
WOOD
RITCHIE
BARBOUR
TUCKER
GRANT
HARDY
WIRT
GILMER
LEWIS
UPSHUR
RANDOLPH
JACKSON
CALHOUN
MASON
ROANE
BRAXTON
PENDLETON
PUTNAM
WEBSTER
CABELL
Charleston
CLAY
KANAWHA
NICHOLAS
POCAHONTAS
WAYNE
LINCOLN
BOONE
FAYETTE
GREENBRIER
LOGAN
RALEIGH
MINGO
WYOMING
SUMMERS
MONROE
McDOWELL
MERCER
Project Location

EXHIBIT 1



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NO.	DATE	REVISION	BY

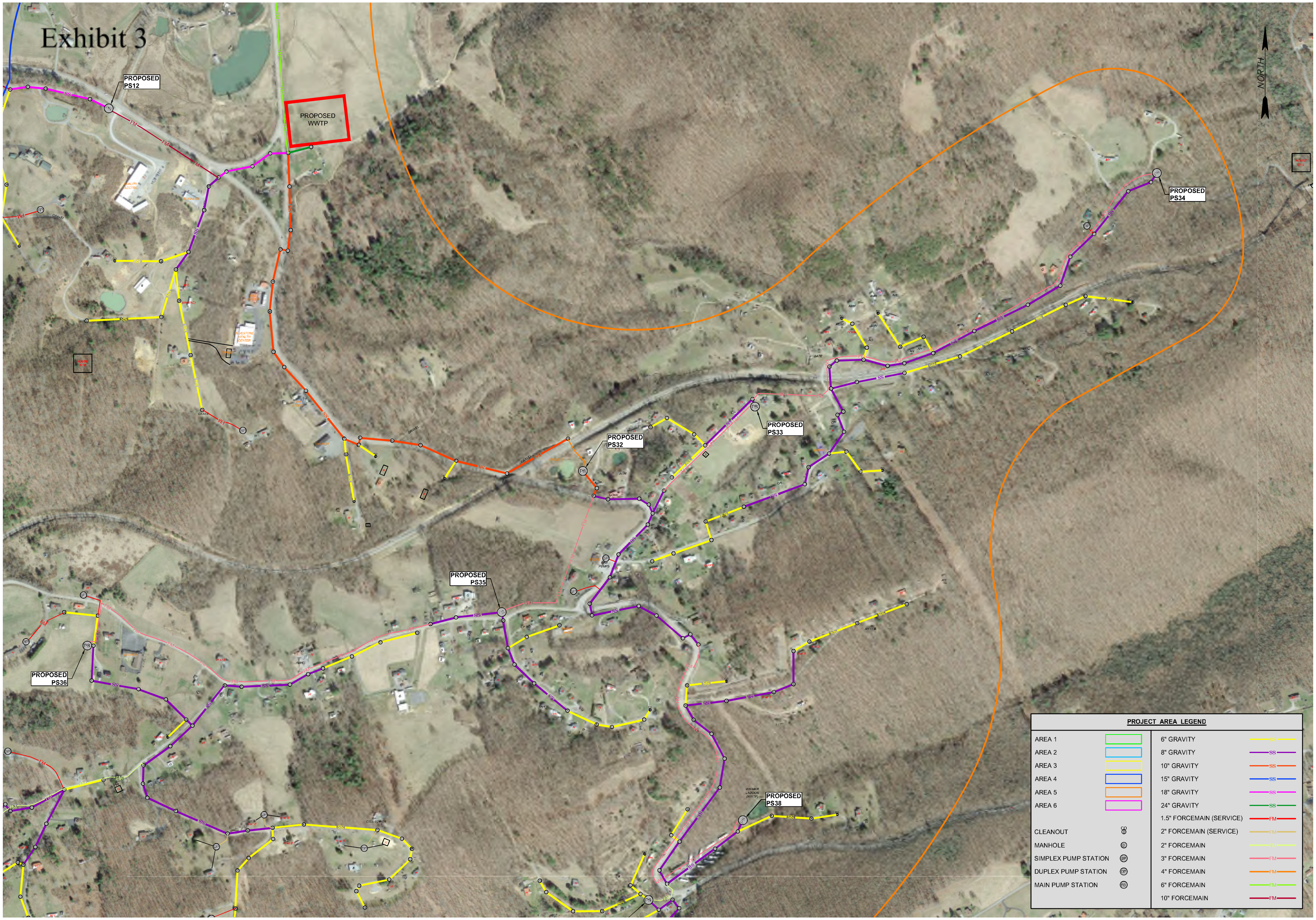
PLANS PREPARED FOR:
MERCER COUNTY
PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT
MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

GRAPHIC SCALE
2000' 0 1000' 2000' 4000'

MERCER COUNTY WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS STUDY

PROJECT LOCATION MAP

PROJECT NUMBER
1021048
DATE
1/24/2022
SHEET NUMBER
1



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NO.	DATE	REVISION	BY

PLANS PREPARED FOR:
MERCER COUNTY
PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT
MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

GRAPHIC SCALE
300' 0 150' 300' 600'

MERCER COUNTY WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS STUDY

PROJECT LOCATION MAP

PROJECT NUMBER
1021048
DATE
1/5/2022
SHEET NUMBER
9