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Trump EPA Announces \$265 Million Water Infrastructure Loan to DeKalb County, Georgia

Nationally, 35 WIFIA loans are helping finance more than \$15.1 billion in water infrastructure projects

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ATLANTA (October 26, 2020) — Today, at an event at the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler and EPA Southeast Regional Administrator Mary Walker announced a \$265 million Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan to DeKalb County, Georgia, for upgrades to its aging wastewater collection and treatment system. This project will help eliminate sanitary sewer overflows, improving water quality in the South River Watershed and better protecting the public.

“Under President Trump, EPA has prioritized funding support for clean water infrastructure, which now includes \$265 million for DeKalb County’s South River Watershed,” **said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler.** “The WIFIA loan funds will go to sewer replacements, upsizing, and additional sewer linings, all while saving ratepayers about \$65 million in interest costs.”

DeKalb County will use EPA’s WIFIA loan to assess and rehabilitate the highest priority areas of its sewer system infrastructure. Upgrades will include sewer replacement, trunk sewer upsizing, full or partial length sewer lining, and related activities at various locations within the county. The project will help eliminate sanitary sewer overflows to better protect public health and the environment in the county.

“EPA is acting on its commitment to infrastructure investment by providing critical support to fund investments in Dekalb County’s future,” **said EPA Region 4 Administrator Mary S. Walker.** “These upgrades are key to improving public health and environmental protections, while delivering good paying jobs and building stronger economies.”

“With the award of this loan and the continued collaboration with the EPA, DeKalb County is positioned to construct a state-of-the-art sanitary sewer system,” **said DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond.** “Replacing this aged and previously neglected system will provide better service and continue to restore the trust of DeKalb County residents and ratepayers.”

This project will cost \$541 million and EPA’s WIFIA loan will finance nearly half of that figure. The remaining project costs will be funded by a combination of a Georgia Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan and revenue bonds. EPA estimates that the WIFIA loan will save DeKalb County an estimated \$65 million and that construction and operation are expected to create approximately 1,800 jobs.

WIFIA is providing financial support at a critical time as the federal government, EPA, and the water sector work together to help mitigate the public health and financial impacts of COVID-19. Since March 2020, WIFIA has announced nineteen loans and updated five existing loans with lower interest rates, saving ratepayers over \$1.2 billion.

Background on WIFIA

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the WIFIA program is a federal loan and guarantee program administered by EPA. WIFIA’s aim is to accelerate investment in the nation’s water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects. The WIFIA program has an active pipeline of pending applications for projects that will result in billions of dollars in water infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs.

For more information about the WIFIA program’s accomplishments through 2019, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-first-wifia-annual-report-highlighting-35-billion-infrastructure-funding>.

For more information about the WIFIA program, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wifia>.

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