

DOCKET NO. D-1986-011 CP-6

DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Discharge to a Tributary of Special Protection Waters

**Brodhead Creek Regional Authority
Wastewater Treatment Plant
Borough of Stroudsburg, Monroe County, Pennsylvania**

PROCEEDINGS

This docket is issued in response to an application submitted to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC or Commission) on October 2, 2023 (Application), for renewal of the docket holder’s existing wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and its discharge. In addition, the docket holder is seeking to modify the sewer service area to include certain additional areas within Pocono Township and Stroud Township. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. PA0029289 for this discharge.

The application was reviewed for continuation of the project in the Comprehensive Plan and approval under Section 3.8 of the *Delaware River Basin Compact*. The Monroe County Planning Commission has been notified of pending action. A public hearing on this project was held by the DRBC on May 8, 2024.

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Purpose. The purpose of this docket is to renew approval of the docket holder’s existing 4.5 million gallons per day (mgd) WWTP and its discharge and to modify the sewer service area to include certain additional areas within Pocono Township and Stroud Township.

2. Location. The docket holder’s WWTP is located at 20 South Fourth Street, adjacent to the confluence of McMichael Creek and Brodhead Creek, in the Borough of Stroudsburg, Monroe County, Pennsylvania. The WWTP will continue to discharge treated effluent to McMichael Creek, which is a tributary to Brodhead Creek, at River Mile 213.0 – 4.0 – 0.2 (Delaware River – Brodhead Creek – McMichael Creek) and is located in the drainage area to the Middle Delaware Special Protection Waters (SPW).

The location of the WWTP outfall in the Brodhead Creek Watershed is as follows:

OUTFALL NO.	LATITUDE (N)	LONGITUDE (W)
001	40° 59’ 16”	75° 11’ 10”

3. **Area Served.** The docket holder's WWTP will continue to receive domestic and commercial wastewater flows from the Borough of Stroudsburg and a portion of Stroud Township, as well as portions of Pocono Township, Paradise Township, Hamilton Township, and Tobyhanna Township located in Monroe County Pennsylvania. The docket holder's WWTP is seeking an expansion of service area to include certain additional areas within Pocono Township and Stroud Township. The sewer service area for the WWTP is depicted on the map entitled "BCRA Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Sewer Service Area Map – September 2023" revised on March 22, 2024. For the purpose of defining the Area Served, the Type of Discharge and the Service Area sections from the docket holder's Application are incorporated herein by reference, to the extent consistent with all other conditions contained in Section C. DECISION of this docket.

4. **Design Criteria.** The docket holder's 4.5 mgd WWTP utilizes a sequencing batch reactor (SBR) treatment process and ultraviolet light (UV) disinfection.

5. **Facilities.** The WWTP facilities consist of a pump station with a coarse screen, three (3) rotating fine screen units and a centrifugal grit removal system, an aerated equalization tank, four (4) SBRs, followed by a post aeration/equalization tank, three (3) tertiary cloth media filters, and a UV disinfection system. Chemical addition is used in the SBRs for alkalinity adjustment and phosphorus reduction.

Sludge handling facilities consist of two (2) sludge thickeners, two (2) parallel Tidflex Aerobic digestion reactors, two (2) belt filter presses for sludge processing, and a coarse bubble mixing/aeration system.

The docket holder's WWTP discharges to waters classified as SPW and is required to have available standby power. The existing WWTP has three (3) generators installed capable of providing standby power.

The docket holder's WWTP is not staffed 24 hours per day and shall have a remote alarm system that continuously monitors plant operations in accordance with the Commission's SPW requirements. The existing WWTP has a SCADA system installed that continuously monitors plant operations.

The docket holder has prepared and implemented an emergency management plan (EMP) for the existing WWTP in accordance with Commission SPW requirements.

The existing WWTP is located adjacent to McMichael and Brodhead Creeks. The existing WWTP facilities are located outside the 100-year flood zone because of an existing United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) levee located between the WWTP and McMichael and Brodhead Creeks. The levee was constructed in 1962 to protect the Borough of Stroudsburg (including the WWTP) from elevated flood waters in McMichael and Brodhead Creeks. The flood protection project (levee) is inspected annually by the PADEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering and USACE, which issue a dual certification for the inspection.

Wasted sludge will continue to be hauled off-site for disposal in accordance with the NPDES Permit No. PA0029289.

6. **Water Withdrawals.** The potable water supply in the project service area is provided by groundwater and surface water sources owned and operated by the docket holder, as described in detail in DRBC Docket No. D-1991-001 CP-4, which was approved on September 13, 2017.
7. **NPDES Permit / DRBC Effluent Requirements.** NPDES Permit No. PA0029289 issued by the PADEP includes final effluent limitations for the project discharge to surface waters classified by the PADEP as supporting trout stocking fishes and migratory fishes (TSF-MF). EFFLUENT TABLE C-1 included in Section C. DECISION condition C.1. of this docket, contains effluent requirements for DRBC parameters that must be met as a condition of this approval. Effluent requirements for Outfall No. 001 are based on a discharge rate of 4.5 mgd.
8. **Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.** The existing WWTP was included in the Comprehensive Plan by Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-1 on April 29, 1986. An expansion of the WWTP was approved via Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-2 on October 22, 2009, and a service area modification was approved for the WWTP via Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-3 on May 8, 2013. The WWTP was renewed and/or modified by Docket Nos. D-1986-011 CP-4 and D-1986-011 CP-5 on December 10, 2014, and March 11, 2020, respectively. Issuance of this docket will continue the WWTP discharge and its service area expansion request in the Comprehensive Plan.

B. FINDINGS

The docket holder applied to renew approval of their existing 4.5 mgd WWTP and its discharge. The docket holder also applied to expand the sewer service area to include certain additional areas within Pocono Township and Stroud Township.

1. Special Protection Waters

In 1992, the DRBC adopted SPW requirements, as part of the DRBC *Water Quality Regulations (WQR)*, designed to protect existing water quality in applicable areas of the Delaware River Basin. One hundred twenty miles of the Delaware River from Hancock, New York downstream to the Delaware Water Gap has been classified by the DRBC as SPW. This stretch includes the sections of the river federally designated as "Wild and Scenic" in 1978 -- the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area -- as well as an eight-mile reach between Milrift and Milford, Pennsylvania which is not federally designated. The SPW regulations apply to this 120-mile stretch of the river and its drainage area.

On July 16, 2008, the DRBC approved amendments to its *WQR* that provide increased protection for waters that the Commission classifies as SPW. The portion of the Delaware River and its tributaries within the boundary of the Lower Delaware River Management Plan Area was approved for SPW designation and clarity on definitions and terms were updated for the entire program.

The docket holder's WWTP discharges to the drainage area to the Middle Delaware SPW. The docket holder's WWTP discharge is required to comply with the SPW requirements, as outlined in Article 3.10.3A.2. of the *WQR*.

Article 3.10.3A.2.e.1). and 2). of the Commission's *WQR* states that projects subject to review under Section 3.8 of the Compact that are in the drainage area of SPW must submit for approval a Non-Point Source Pollution Control Plan (NPSPCP) that controls the new or increased non-point source loads generated within the portion of the docket holder's service area which is also located within the drainage area of SPW. The stormwater management ordinance requirements contained in the Brodhead-McMichael Creek Watershed Act 167 Plan (Act 167 Plan), approved by the PADEP on March 10, 2006, satisfy the NPSPCP of the Commission. Stroudsburg Borough, Stroud Township, Pocono Township, Paradise Township, Hamilton Township, and Tobyhanna Township (the municipalities served by the BCRA's Stroudsburg WWTP) have adopted and implemented stormwater ordinances in accordance with the Act 167 Plan. These ordinances meet the requirements of Article 3.10.3.A.2.e.1 of the Commission's Water Quality Regulations for the Area Served as described in A.3. above. Prior to allowing connections from any new service areas or any new developments not in compliance with these Ordinances the docket holder shall submit and have approved by the Executive Director of the DRBC a Non-Point Source Pollution Control Plan (NPSPCP) in accordance with Section 3.10.3.A.2.e. See Section C. DECISION Condition 2.

2. Other

At the docket holder's WWTP discharge, the McMichael Creek has an estimated seven-day low flow with a recurrence interval of ten years (Q_{7-10}) of 12.11 mgd (22.5 cfs). The ratio of this low flow to the hydraulic design wastewater discharge rate from the 4.5 mgd WWTP is 2.7 to 1 (12.11 mgd / 4.5 mgd).

The nearest surface water intake of record for public water supply is located on the Delaware River approximately 30 River Miles downstream of the docket holder's WWTP and is operated by City of Easton.

The project does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and is designed to prevent substantial adverse impact on the water resources related environment, while sustaining the current and future water uses and development of the water resources of the Basin.

The effluent limits in the NPDES Permit conform with Commission effluent quality requirements, where applicable.

The project is designed to produce a discharge that meets the effluent requirements as set forth in the Commission's *Water Quality Regulations (WQR)*.

C. DECISION

Effective on the approval date for Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-6 below, the project described in Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-5 is removed from the Comprehensive Plan to the extent that it is not included in Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-6; Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-5 is terminated and replaced by Docket No. D-1986-011 CP-6; and the project and the appurtenant facilities described in Section A “DESCRIPTION” of this docket shall be included in the Comprehensive Plan. The project and appurtenant facilities as described in Section A of this docket are approved pursuant to Section 3.8 of the *Compact*, subject to the following conditions:

Monitoring and Reporting

1. The docket holder shall comply with the requirements contained in the EFFLUENT TABLE below. The docket holder shall submit the required monitoring results electronically to the DRBC Project Review Section via email aemr@drbc.gov on the **Annual Effluent Monitoring Report Form** located at this web address: <https://www.nj.gov/drbc/programs/project/docket-app-info.html#3>. The monitoring results shall be submitted annually, absent any observed limit violations, by January 31. If a DRBC effluent limit is violated, the docket holder shall submit the result(s) to the DRBC within 30 days of the violation(s) and provide a written explanation that states the action(s) the docket holder has taken to correct the violation(s) and protect against any future violations. The following average monthly effluent limits are among those listed in the NPDES Permit and meet or are more stringent than the effluent requirements of the DRBC.

EFFLUENT TABLE C-1: DRBC Parameters Included in NPDES Permit

OUTFALL 001 (McMichael Creek)		
PARAMETER	LIMIT	MONITORING
pH (Standard Units)	6 to 9 at all times	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Suspended Solids	85% minimum removal 10 mg/l; 375 lbs/day	As required by NPDES Permit
CBOD (5-Day at 20° C)	10 mg/l; 375 lbs/day 85% minimum removal	As required by NPDES Permit
Ammonia-Nitrogen (5/1 to 10/31) (11/1 to 4/30)	1.5 mg/l; 56.3 lbs/day 4.5 mg/l; 169 lbs/day	As required by NPDES Permit
Fecal Coliform	200 colonies per 100 ml	As required by NPDES Permit
Dissolved Oxygen	7.0 mg/l (minimum at all times)	As required by NPDES Permit
Nitrate as Nitrogen (5/1-10/31)	4.0 mg/l; 150 lbs/day	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Phosphorus	1.0mg/l; 37.5 lbs/day	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Dissolved Solids*	1,000 mg/l	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen	Monitor & Report	As required by NPDES

OUTFALL 001 (McMichael Creek)		
PARAMETER	LIMIT	MONITORING
		Permit
Nitrate + Nitrite as N	Monitor & Report	As required by NPDES Permit
BOD (5-Day at 20° C)	Monitor & Report	As required by NPDES Permit

*See DECISION Condition C.5.

Other Conditions

2. Prior to allowing connections from any new service areas or any new developments not in compliance with the Ordinances described in Section B.1. above, the docket holder shall submit and have approved by the Executive Director of the DRBC a Non-Point Source Pollution Control Plan (NPSPCP) in accordance with Section 3.10.3.A.2.e.

3. Prior to the docket holder initiating any substantial alterations or additions to the existing WWTP as defined in Section 3.10.3A2.a.16) of the Commission’s *WQR*, an application must be submitted and approved by the Commission. Such an application shall be submitted prior to final design to ensure that the Commission can provide the docket holder with draft effluent limitations for SPW specific parameters as guidance for design as to not require duplication of work or cause a substantial expenditure of public funds without Commission approval. The docket holder is encouraged to contact the Commission staff during the planning stages to identify the potential effluent limitations required to meet the no measurable change parameters under SPW.

4. Except as otherwise authorized by this docket, if the docket holder seeks relief from any limitation based upon a DRBC water quality standard or minimum treatment requirement, the docket holder shall apply for approval from the Executive Director or for a docket revision in accordance with Section 3.8 of the *Compact* and the *Rules of Practice and Procedure*.

5. The docket holder may request in writing, for approval from the Executive Director for the substitution of specific conductance for TDS. The request should include information that supports the effluent specific correlation between TDS and specific conductance. Upon review, the Executive Director may modify the docket to allow the substitution of specific conductance for TDS monitoring.

6. Section 2.3.10 of the Commission’s *Rules of Practice and Procedure (RPP)* (18 C.F.R. 401.41), limiting the Commission’s approval to three years in the absence of an expenditure of substantial funds by the project sponsor in reliance on the approval, is hereby waived for good cause shown in accordance with Section 2.9.3 (18 C.F.R. 401.123) of the same regulations. This approval shall expire on the expiration date set forth below unless prior thereto the docket holder has applied to the Commission to renew or extend this approval.

7. The docket holder is responsible for timely submittal to the DRBC of a docket renewal application on the appropriate application form including the appropriate docket application filing fee (see 18 C.F.R. 401.43) at least 6 months in advance of the docket expiration date set forth below. The docket holder will be subject to late filed renewal surcharges in the event of untimely submittal of its renewal application, whether DRBC issues a reminder notice in advance of the deadline or the docket holder receives such notice. If a timely and complete application for renewal has been submitted and the DRBC is unable, through no fault of the docket holder, to reissue the docket before the expiration date below, the terms and conditions of the current docket will remain fully effective and enforceable pending the grant or denial of the application for docket approval.

8. The docket holder is permitted to treat and discharge wastewater as set forth in the Area Served Section of this docket, which incorporates by reference the Type of Discharge and Service Area sections of the docket holder's Application to the extent consistent with all other conditions of this section. Any expansion beyond that included in Section A.3. Area Served is subject to DRBC review and approval in accordance with Section 3.8 of the Compact.

9. In accordance with the Commission's regulations at 18 C.F.R. Part 440, the docket holder is prohibited from discharging wastewater from high volume hydraulic fracturing ("HVHF") or HVHF-related activities to waters or land within the Basin. The docket holder is further prohibited from discharging hydraulic fracturing wastewater, whether treated or untreated, from sources within or outside the Basin, without obtaining the Commission's prior review and express approval in the form of a revised docket. Violation of this or any condition of this docket approval may result in enforcement, including the risk of financial penalties, pursuant to Section 14.17 of the Delaware River Basin Compact and Section 2.7.8 (18 CFR 401.98) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

10. The facility and operational records shall be available at all times for inspection by the DRBC.

11. The facility shall be operated at all times to comply with the requirements of the Commission's *WQR*.

12. If at any time the receiving treatment plant proves unable to produce an effluent that is consistent with the requirements of this docket approval, no further connections shall be permitted until the deficiency is remedied.

13. Nothing herein shall be construed to exempt the docket holder from obtaining all necessary permits and/or approvals from other State, Federal or local government agencies having jurisdiction over this project.

14. The docket holder shall discharge wastewater in such a manner as to avoid injury or damage to fish or wildlife and shall avoid any injury to public or private property.

15. No sewer service connections shall be made to newly constructed premises with plumbing fixtures and fittings that do not comply with water conservation performance standards contained in Resolution No. 88-2 (Revision 2).

16. The issuance of this docket approval shall not create any private or proprietary rights in the waters of the Basin, and the Commission reserves the right to amend, suspend or rescind the docket for cause, to ensure proper control, use and management of the water resources of the Basin.

17. The docket holder shall be subject to applicable DRBC regulatory program fees, in accordance with duly adopted DRBC resolutions and/or regulations (see 18 C.F.R. 401.43).

18. This approval is transferable by request to the DRBC Executive Director provided that the project purpose and area served approved by the Commission in this docket will not be materially altered because of the change in project ownership. The request shall be submitted on the appropriate form and be accompanied by the appropriate fee (see 18 C.F.R. 401.43).

19. The docket holder shall request a name change of the entity to which this approval is issued if the name of the entity to which this approval is issued changes its name. The request for name change shall be submitted on the appropriate form and be accompanied by the appropriate fee (see 18 C.F.R. 401.43).

20. The Executive Director may modify or suspend this approval or any condition thereof, or require mitigating measures pending additional review, if in the Executive Director's judgment such modification or suspension is required to protect the water resources of the Basin.

21. Any person who objects to a docket decision by the Commission may request a hearing in accordance with Article 6 of the *Rules of Practice and Procedure (RPP)*. In accordance with Section 15.1(p) of the *Delaware River Basin Compact*, cases and controversies arising under the *Compact* are reviewable in the United States district courts.

BY THE COMMISSION

APPROVAL DATE: June 5, 2024

EXPIRATION DATE: May 8, 2030