

DOCKET NO. D-1975-016 CP-6

DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

**Ambler Borough
Wastewater Treatment Plant
Upper Dublin Township, Montgomery Township, Pennsylvania**

PROCEEDINGS

This docket is issued in response to an application submitted to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC or Commission) on September 6, 2022 (Application), for renewal and proposed flow diversion from Upper Dublin Township (UDT) WWTP to the docket holder's existing wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to be treated. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. PA0026603 for this discharge. PADEP issued an approval of the UDT WWTP flow diversion and facility decommissioning on June 30, 2022.

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 Montgomery County Planning Commission has been notified of pending action. A public hearing on this project was held by the DRBC on February 9, 2022.

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Purpose. The purpose of this docket is to approve a proposed increase in flow from the docket holder's facility to accommodate the acceptance of flow from the existing UDT WWTP, operated by the Bucks County Water & Sewer Authority (BCWSA). To accommodate the increase in flow (approximately 1.28 mgd diverted from UDT WWTP), the docket holder proposes to expand its existing influent pump station and increase the existing annual average flow of the facility from 6.5 mgd to 7.7 mgd.

2. Location. The docket holder's WWTP is located at Church Street in Upper Dublin Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The WWTP will continue to discharge treated effluent to the Wissahickon Creek, at River Mile 92.5 – 12.8 – 12.7 (Delaware River – Schuylkill River – Wissahickon Creek).

The location of the WWTP outfall in the Schuylkill River Watershed is as follows:

OUTFALL NO.	LATITUDE (N)	LONGITUDE (W)
001	40° 8' 40"	75° 13' 13"

3. **Area Served.** The docket holder's WWTP will receive diverted flows from 3 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) currently served by the BCSWA's UDT WWTP. The docket holder's WWTP will continue to serve Ambler Borough and portions of Upper Dublin, Whitpain, Whitmarsh and Lower Gwynedd Townships, all located in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The docket holder plans to additionally serve 2 new developments in Amber Borough referred to as 'Ambler Crossings' and 'Ambler Lakeview'. Other areas within Whitmarsh and Whitpain Townships are planned to be added to the docket holder's service area in the future. The docket holder's WWTP will additionally accommodate flow previously from the UDT WWTP, this area includes the area within Upper Dublin Township serviced by the 'Twining Valley', 'Walnut Lane', an 'Camphill Road' Pump Stations, this will increase the docket holder's service area to include most of Upper Dublin Township and an additional portion of Whitmarsh Township.

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 8.0 mgd WWTP utilizes a biological primary trickling filter system treatment process and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection. The existing WWTP operates at an annual average flow of 6.5 mgd and a hydraulic design capacity of 8 mgd. The docket holder proposes to expand its existing influent pump station with an 100 horse-power submersible pump to accommodate the increases in its service area and diverted flow from UDT WWTP, and the Ambler WWTP annual average flow will increase from 6.5 mgd to 7.7 mgd.

5. **Facilities.** The Ambler WWTP facilities consist of an influent pump station, fine screening, a grit removal chamber, 2 primary clarifiers, 2 plastic-media primary trickling filters, 2 pump stations that operate between another set of 2 plastic-media trickling filters, 2 secondary clarifiers, 2 nitrification towers, a dissolved air flotation (DAF) building, a supplementary back-up chlorine contact disinfection tank, and an UV disinfection unit that discharges via an aeration cascade. Solids handling facilities include, a gravity thickener, 4 anaerobic digesters and a belt filter press.

Several of the WWTP facilities are located in the 100-year floodplain and floodway. The docket holder indicated in the application that the WWTP facilities located in the floodplain are not located in the floodway and are flood proofed up to the flood protection elevation (one foot above the 100-year flood elevation).

Wasted sludge will continue to be hauled off-site for disposal in accordance with the NPDES Permit No. PA0026603

6. **Water Withdrawals.** The potable water supply in the project service area is provided by the docket holder. The docket holder's water withdrawal is described in detail in Docket No. D-1985-026 CP-6, which was approved on September 11, 2019.

7. **NPDES Permit / DRBC Effluent Requirements.** NPDES Permit No. PA0026603 issued by the PADEP includes final effluent limitations for the project discharge to surface waters classified by the PADEP as supporting trout stocking waters (TSW). EFFLUENT TABLES C-1, C-2, and C-3 included in Section C. DECISION condition C.1. of this docket, contain effluent requirements for DRBC parameters that must be met as a condition of this approval. Effluent requirements for Outfall No. 001 are based on existing and proposed discharge rate of 6.5 mgd and 7.7 mgd.

8. **Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.** The existing WWTP was included in the “Comprehensive Plan Addendum #1, Section VII – Pre-existing Projects”, adopted July 25, 1963. The WWTP approval was renewed and/or modified by Docket Nos. listed below. Issuance of this docket will continue the WWTP and its discharge in the Comprehensive Plan.

DOCKET NO.	DATE APPROVED	DESCRIPTION
D-1968-049 CP	May 25, 1968	Treatment Facilities Added
D-1975-016 CP	January 12, 1977	Facility Upgrade & Expansion
D-1975-016 CP-2	March 12, 2008	Re-Rate
D-1975-016 CP-3	July 13, 2011	Approval Renewal
D-1975-016 CP-4	September 14, 2016	Approval Renewal
D-1975-016 CP-5	December 8, 2021	Approval Renewal

B. FINDINGS

The docket holder applied to approve a proposed increase in flow annual average flow capacity from 6.5 mgd to 7.7 mgd for the docket holder’s facility to accommodate the acceptance of flow from the Upper Dublin Township (UDT) WWTP, currently operated by the Bucks County Water & Sewer Authority (BCWSA). In addition to receiving the UDT WWTP service area, the docket holder additionally plans to add to its existing service area by receiving flows from additional portions of townships that it currently serves. The docket holder plans to increase its current hydraulic capacity from 8.0 mgd to 9.5 mgd in the future.

At the docket holder’s WWTP discharge, the Wissahickon Creek has an estimated seven-day low flow with a recurrence interval of ten years (Q_{7-10}) of 0.45 mgd (0.84 cfs). The ratio of this low flow to the proposed hydraulic design wastewater discharge rate from the 9.5 mgd WWTP is 0.047 to 1.

The nearest surface water intake of record for public water supply is located on Schuylkill River approximately 13 River Miles downstream of the docket holder’s WWTP and is operated by City of Philadelphia.

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-1975-016 CP-6 below, the project described in Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-5 is removed from the Comprehensive Plan to the extent that they are not included in Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-6; Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-5 is terminated and replaced by Docket No. D-1975-016 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 TABLES 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 (Discharging 6.5 mgd to Wissahickon Creek)		
PARAMETER	LIMIT	MONITORING
pH (Standard Units)	6 to 9 at all times	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Suspended Solids	30 mg/l	As required by NPDES Permit
CBOD ₅ (at 20° C) (5-1 to 10-31) (11-1 to 4-30)	10 mg/l (85% Removal Minimum) 20 mg/l (85% Removal Minimum)	As required by NPDES Permit
Ammonia Nitrogen (5-1 to 10-31) (11-1 to 4-30)	1.5 mg/l 4.5 mg/l	As required by NPDES Permit
Fecal Coliform	200 colonies per 100 ml as a geo. avg.	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Dissolved Solids*	1,000 mg/l*	As required by NPDES Permit

* See DECISION Condition C.6

The following monitoring requirements and average monthly effluent limits are for DRBC parameters not listed in the NPDES Permit.

EFFLUENT TABLE C-2: DRBC Parameters Not Included in NPDES Permit for Existing Facility

OUTFALL 001 (Discharging 6.5 mgd to Wissahickon Creek)		
PARAMETER	LIMIT	MONITORING
CBOD ₅ (at 20° C) Influent	Monitor & Report	Monthly

EFFLUENT TABLE C-3: DRBC Parameters for Proposed Re-Rated Facility

OUTFALL 001 (Discharging 7.7 mgd to Wissahickon Creek)		
PARAMETER	LIMIT	MONITORING
pH (Standard Units)	6 to 9 at all times	Daily
Total Suspended Solids	30 mg/l	Monthly
CBOD ₅ (at 20° C) Influent	Monitor & Report	Monthly
CBOD ₅ (at 20° C) (5-1 to 10-31) (11-1 to 4-30)	10 mg/l (85% Removal Minimum) 20 mg/l (85% Removal Minimum)	Monthly
Ammonia Nitrogen(5-1 to 10-31) (11-1 to 4-30)	1.5 mg/l 4.5 mg/l	Monthly
Fecal Coliform	200 colonies per 100 ml as a geo. avg.	Monthly
Total Dissolved Solids*	1,000 mg/l*	Quarterly

* See DECISION Condition C.6

2. Within 10 days of the date that construction of the project has started, the docket holder shall notify the DRBC of the starting date and scheduled completion date. Within 30 days of the date of project completion, the docket holder shall notify the DRBC of the project completion date.
3. Within 30 days of completion of construction of the approved project, the docket holder is to submit to the attention of the Project Review Section of DRBC a Construction Completion Statement ("Statement") signed by the docket holder's professional engineer for the project. The Statement must (1) either confirm that construction has been completed in a manner consistent with all DRBC-approved plans or explain how the as-built project deviates from such plans; and (2) indicate the date on which the project was (or is to be) placed in operation.

Other Conditions

4. Sound practices of excavation, backfill and reseeding shall be followed to minimize erosion and deposition of sediment in streams.
5. 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*.
6. The docket holder may request of the Executive Director in writing 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.

7. 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.

8. 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 or not 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

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

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

13. 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.

14. 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.

- 15.** 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.
- 16.** 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).
- 17.** 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.
- 18.** 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).
- 19.** 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).
- 20.** 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).
- 21.** 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.
- 22.** 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: March 8, 2023

EXPIRATION DATE: September 30, 2028