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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
DIVISION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

ADOPTED AMENDMENT TO THE UPPER RARITAN WATER QUALITY
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public Notice

Take notice that on **NOV 18 2000**, pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 58:11A-1 et seq., and the Statewide Water Quality Management Planning rules (N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4), an amendment to the Water Quality Management Plan was adopted by the Department of Environmental Protection (Department). This amendment modifies the Somerset County/Upper Raritan Watershed Wastewater Management Plan (WMP). The amendment was submitted by Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority (SRVSA) and allows the establishment of an outfall location directly on the Raritan River. Currently, SRVSA discharges to Cuckles Brook under a permitted flow of 23.3 million gallons per day (mgd). Under these flow conditions, SRVSA has not been able to meet the Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) limit of 500 mg/l. To alleviate this problem, this amendment allows the applicant to change the outfall location for the primary discharged flow to the main stem of the Raritan River. The Cuckles Brook outfall location will remain to handle a portion of diverted flow during conditions exceeding a 25-year flood event. The existing planned flow is 24.3 mgd and the applicant will be applying concurrently with permitting to increase their permitted flow to 24.3 mgd. An Anti-degradation analysis will be required to increase the permitted flow to 24.3 mgd. Cuckles Brook and the Raritan River are classified as FW2-NT waters.

The new 72-inch outfall pipe will be used in conjunction with the construction of the plant expansion to the approved planning flow of 24.3 mgd. This 72-inch outfall pipe will convey peak flows associated with up to a 25-year flood event to the Raritan River through the primary discharge at the Raritan River outfall pipe without affecting plant operation. Discharge to the Cuckles Brook outfall pipe will be retained as a secondary discharge point. When flood conditions exceed

those expected with a 25-year flood, and primary outfall capacity is reduced, an overflow structure will relieve excess discharge flow to Cuckles Brook. During these occurrences, Cuckles Brook is expected to be flowing full, thus providing significant dilution capacity.

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This amendment proposal was noticed in the New Jersey Register on July 3, 2000 at N.J.R. 2504(b). Comments on this amendment were received during the public comment period and are summarized below with the Department's responses.

COMMENT: The Township of Bridgewater believes that the proposed increase in capacity is an inappropriate direction to take because it does not address the systematic problem of Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) into the SRVSA system. No provision has been made in the proposed plan for remediation of I/I. SRVSA has expended considerable sums in engineering studies of I/I but has never come up with an actual remediation project. The Township has conducted its own studies and moved forward with remediation projects with success. Had other municipalities and SRVSA similarly taken up the burden of addressing I/I within their jurisdiction a substantial reduction in the amount of extraneous flow would have been achieved and made the proposed increase unnecessary. Remediating the I/I problems throughout the SRVSA system, both in the lines which SRVSA controls and in the lines within the jurisdiction of the municipalities, is the proper course to follow both on policy and economic grounds.

RESPONSE: The Department agrees with the commenter regarding the need for both SRVSA and the individual municipalities to address the SRVSA I/I problem. Sewage treatment plant expansion should not be the focus for addressing the I/I problems but rather actual remedial investigations and corrective work within the collection and conveyance systems. However, this amendment does not propose any additional expansion of the SRVSA sewage treatment plant beyond that which was previously approved in March 1999 in the Upper Raritan Watershed WMP and based on the zoning and population projections performed by the Somerset County Planning Department. The

current amendment strictly addresses the establishment of the primary outfall to the main stem Raritan River.

This amendment was evaluated in accordance with Executive Order 109⁽²⁰⁰⁰⁾ and N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.18 and no alternative analysis are required at this planning stage. This amendment represents only one part of the permit process and other issues will be addressed prior to final permit issuance. Additional issues which were not reviewed in conjunction with this amendment but which may need to be addressed may include, but are not limited to, the following: antidegradation; effluent limitations; water quality analysis; exact locations and designs of future treatment works (pump stations, interceptors, sewers, outfalls, wastewater treatment plants); and development in wetlands, flood prone areas, designated Wild and Scenic River areas, or other environmentally sensitive areas which are subject to regulation under Federal or State statutes or rules.



Lance R. Miller
Director
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Department of Environmental Protection

11/18/00
Date

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