



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
17 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333

DEPARTMENT ORDER

IN THE MATTER OF

MERRILL BLUEBERRY FARMS, INC.)	PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT
HANCOCK, HANCOCK COUNTY, MAINE)	OF WATERS
SURFACE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL SYSTEM)	
MEU507792)	WASTE DISCHARGE LICENSE
W007792-5P-E-R)	RENEWAL
APPROVAL)	

Pursuant to *Conditions of Licenses*, 38 MRS§ 414-A and applicable regulations of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEPARTMENT), the Department has considered the application of MERRILL BLUEBERRY FARMS, INC (Merrill/licensee hereinafter), with its supportive data, agency review comments, and other related materials on file and FINDS THE FOLLOWING FACTS:

APPLICATION SUMMARY

On February 2, 2020 Merrill submitted an application to the Department for the renewal of Waste Discharge License (WDL/license) W007792-5P-D-R, issued by the Department on May 13, 2015. The 5/13/15 WDL authorized the operation of a surface wastewater disposal (spray irrigation) system for blueberry processing and wash down wastewater generated at a rate of 72,000 gallons per day. The WDL authorized the licensee to apply wastewater to the spray irrigation fields at a rate of no greater than 2.5 inches per week (~67,881 gallons per acre per week) for a total maximum of 746,691 gallons per week over the entire 11-acre spray irrigation area.

LICENSE SUMMARY

This licensing action is carrying forward all the terms and conditions of the previous license except that this license:

1. Revises Special Condition M. Pesticides and requires the licensee to submit a list of pesticides used during the previous season and institute sampling January 1st–May 31st following the use of Propiconazole or Methoxyfenozide during the previous season. Special Condition M also requires the licensee to sample for these parameters in one groundwater monitoring well that is downgradient of the wastewater storage lagoon(s) at a frequency of once in a 5-year license cycle.
2. Combines Groundwater Monitoring Wells GW11 & GW21 as they are sampled from the same internal point.

CONCLUSIONS

BASED on the findings in the attached Fact Sheet dated December 13, 2022, and subject to the Conditions listed below, the Department makes the following conclusions:

1. The discharge, either by itself or in combination with other discharges, will not lower the quality of any classified body of water below such classification.
2. The discharge, either by itself or in combination with other discharges, will not lower the quality of any unclassified body of water below the classification which the Department expects to adopt in accordance with state law.
3. The provisions of the State's antidegradation policy, *Classification of Maine waters*, 38 M.R.S.A § 464(4)(F), will be met, in that:
 - (a) Existing in-stream water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect and maintain those existing uses will be maintained and protected;
 - (b) Where high quality waters of the State constitute an outstanding national resource, that water quality will be maintained and protected;
 - (c) Where the standards of classification of the receiving water body are not met, the discharge will not cause or contribute to the failure of the water body to meet the standards of classification;
 - (d) Where the actual quality of any classified receiving water body exceeds the minimum standards of the next highest classification that higher water quality will be maintained and protected; and
 - (e) Where a discharge will result in lowering the existing water quality of any water body, the Department has made the finding, following opportunity for public participation, that this action is necessary to achieve important economic or social benefits to the State.
4. The discharge will be subject to effluent limitations that require application of best practicable treatment as defined in *Conditions of Licenses* 38 M.R.S. § 414-A(1)(D).

ACTION

THEREFORE, the Department APPROVES the above noted application of MERRILL BLUEBERRY FARMS, INC., to operate a surface wastewater disposal system to treat and dispose of 746,691 gallons per week of food processing and wash-down wastewater to ground water, Class GW-A, in Hancock, Maine, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS, and all applicable standards and regulations including:

1. *"Standard Conditions of Industrial Waste Discharge Licenses,"* revised August 14, 1996, copy attached.
2. The attached Special Conditions, including effluent limitations and monitoring requirements.
3. This license and the authorization to discharge become effective upon the date of signature below and expire at midnight five (5) years from the effective date. If a renewal application is timely submitted and accepted as complete for processing prior to the expiration of this license, the authorization to discharge and the terms and conditions of this license and all modifications and minor revisions thereto remain in effect until a final Department decision on the renewal application becomes effective. [Maine Administrative Procedure Act, 5 M.R.S. § 10002 and Rules Concerning the Processing of Applications and Other Administrative Matters, 06-096 CMR 2(21)(A) (amended June 9, 2018)].

PLEASE NOTE ATTACHED SHEET FOR GUIDANCE ON APPEAL PROCEDURES

DONE AND DATED AT AUGUSTA, MAINE, THIS 13 DAY OF December 2022.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

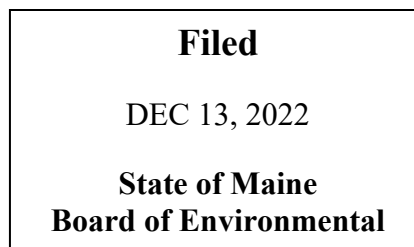
BY: 

for MELANIE LOYZIM, Commissioner

Date of initial receipt of application: February 20, 2020

Date of application acceptance: February 20, 2020

Date filed with Board of Environmental Protection



This Order prepared by Rod Robert, BUREAU OF WATER QUALITY

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

1. The licensee is authorized to operate a surface wastewater treatment and disposal system. The **LAGOON (OUTFALL 001)** ⁽¹⁾ must be limited and monitored as specified below.⁽¹⁾

Parameter	Daily <u>Maximum</u> as specified	Measurement <u>Frequency</u> as specified	Sample <u>Type</u> as specified
Lagoon Freeboard [82564]	Report (feet) ⁽²⁾ [27]	1/Month ⁽³⁾ [01/30]	Measure [MS]
Biochemical Oxygen Demand [00310]	Report, mg/L [19]	1/Month ⁽³⁾ [01/30]	Grab [GR]
Nitrate-Nitrogen [00620]	Report, mg/L [19]	1/Month ⁽³⁾ [01/30]	Grab [GR]
PH (Standard Units) [00400]	Report S.U. [12]	1/Month ⁽³⁾ [01/30]	Grab [GR]

The bracketed italicized numeric values in the table above and tables that follow are code numbers that the Department personnel utilize to code the monthly Discharge Monitoring Reports.

Footnotes: See pages 7–8 of this license.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

2. Application of wastewater to the land via a spray irrigation system must be limited to the time period **April 15th to November 15th of each calendar year**. The **SPRAY-IRRIGATION FIELD, FLD#1**, must be limited and monitored as specified below:

Parameter	Monthly <u>Total</u> as specified	Weekly <u>Average</u> as specified	Measurement <u>Frequency</u> as specified	Sample <u>Type</u> as specified
Flow – Total Gallons ⁽⁴⁾ [82220]	---	746,691 gal/week ⁽⁵⁾ [8G]	1/Week [01/07]	Calculate [CA]
Flow – Total Gallons ⁽⁴⁾ [82220]	Report (Gallons) [8D]	---	1/Month [01/30]	Calculate [CA]

Footnotes: See pages 7–8 of this license.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

- 3. GROUND WATER MONITORING WELLS; GW-11 & GW-21** (Combination well sampled from the same point), **GW-31** (southerly of the processing plant), **GW-41** (easterly of the spray irrigation area) must be limited and monitored as specified below.

Monitoring Parameters	Daily <u>Maximum</u> as specified	Measurement <u>Frequency</u> as specified	Sample <u>Type</u> as specified
Nitrate-Nitrogen [00620]	10 mg/L [19]	2/Year ⁽⁶⁾ [02/YR]	Grab [GR]
Specific Conductance [00095]	Report (umhos/cm) [11]	2/Year ⁽⁶⁾ [02/YR]	Grab [GR]
Temperature [00011]	Report (Fahrenheit) [15]	2/Year ⁽⁶⁾ [02/YR]	Grab [GR]
PH (Standard Units) [00400]	Report (S.U.) [12]	2/Year ⁽⁶⁾ [02/YR]	Grab [GR]
Total Suspended Solids [00530]	Report (mg/L) [19]	2/Year ⁽⁶⁾ [02/YR]	Grab [GR]

Footnotes: See pages 7–8 of this license.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (cont'd)

Footnotes:

1. **Sampling** – Lagoon effluent must be sampled at a point in the lagoon's effluent discharge pipe leading to the spray irrigation area and must be representative of what is sprayed on the fields. Any change in sampling location must be approved by the Department in writing.

The licensee must conduct sampling and analysis in accordance with; a) methods approved by 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 136, b) alternative methods approved by the Department in accordance with the procedures in 40 CFR Part 136, or c) as otherwise specified by the Department. Samples that are sent out for analysis must be analyzed by a laboratory certified by the State of Maine's Department of Health and Human Services for wastewater. Samples that are sent to a publicly owned treatment works (POTW) pursuant to *Waste discharge licenses*, 38 M.R.S. § 413 are subject to the provisions and restrictions of *Maine Comprehensive and Limited Environmental Laboratory Certification Rules*, 10-144 CMR 263 (effective December 19, 2018). Laboratory facilities that analyze compliance samples in-house are subject to the provisions and restrictions of 10 – 144 CMR 263. If the permittee monitors any pollutant more frequently than required by the permit using test procedures approved under 40 CFR Part 136 or as specified in this permit, the results of this monitoring must be included in the calculation and reporting of the data submitted in the discharge monitoring report (DMR).

2. **Lagoon freeboard** must be reported as the mathematical difference between the water level in the lagoon and the lowest elevation point in the top of the lagoon berm. It must be measured monthly to the nearest one tenth (1/10th) of a foot, with the minimum monthly value reported on the DMR. If site conditions prevent safe or accurate measurements, the licensee must estimate this value and indicate this to the Department.
3. **Lagoon Effluent Sampling Period** – effluent sampling must be conducted in the months of **April, May, August, and October** of each calendar year in accordance with approved methods for sampling, handling and preservation. With the exception of freeboard, the licensee is not required to test for these parameters during a month where no wastewater was disposed of via the spray irrigation system.
4. **Spray Application Rate Calculation** – A field's weekly application rate is the total gallons sprayed over the applicable period of time. The licensee must measure the flow of wastewater to the spray irrigation area by the use of a flow measuring device that is checked for calibration at least once per calendar year. Weekly is defined as Sunday through Saturday.
5. **DMR Reporting** – For Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) reporting purposes, the licensee must report the highest weekly application rate for the month in the applicable box on the form. Compliance with weekly reporting requirements must be reported for the month in which the calendar week ends.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (cont'd)

Footnotes:

6. **Groundwater Monitoring** – Groundwater sampling must be conducted the months of **May and October** of each year. Sampling, handling and preservation must be conducted in accordance with federally approved methods. Specific conductance (calibrated to 25.0° C), temperature, and pH are considered to be “field” parameters and are to be measured in the field via instrumentation.

B. TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR

The person who has the management responsibility over the treatment facility must hold a **Grade SITS-II** (or higher) certificate or Registered Maine Professional Engineer pursuant to Title 32 M.R.S. § 4171 *et seq.* and *Regulations for Wastewater Operator Certification*, 06-096 CMR 531 (effective May 8, 2006). All proposed contracts for facility operation by any person must be approved by the Department before the licensee may engage the services of the contract operator.

C. AUTHORIZED DISCHARGES

The licensee is authorized to discharge to discharge only: 1) in accordance with the licensee's General Application for Waste Discharge License, accepted for processing on February 20, 2020; 2) in accordance with the terms and conditions of this license; and 3) to the existing spray-irrigation field SF-1. Discharges of wastewater from any other point source(s) are not authorized under this license and must be reported in accordance with Standard Condition D(1)(F), *Twenty-four-hour reporting*, of this license.

D. NARRATIVE EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS

1. The licensee must not discharge effluent that contain materials in concentrations or combinations which would impair the uses designated for the classification of the ground water.
2. The licensee must not discharge effluent that lowers the quality of any classified body of water (ground water is a classified body of water under *Standards for Classification of Fresh surface Waters*, 38 § 465(C) below such classification, or lowers the existing quality of any body of water if the existing quality is higher than the classification.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

E. NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

In accordance with Standard Condition D, the licensee must notify the Department of the following:

1. Any substantial change in the volume or character of pollutants being introduced into the treatment system. For the purposes of this section, notice regarding substantial change must include information on:
 - a. the quality and quantity of wastewater introduced to the treatment system; and
 - b. any anticipated impact caused by the change in the quantity or quality of the wastewater to be introduced into the treatment system.

F. GENERAL OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

1. All wastewaters must receive treatment through a properly designed, operated and maintained screen and settling tank system prior to land irrigation.
2. The spray irrigation facilities must be effectively maintained and operated at all times so that there is no discharge to surface water, nor any contamination of ground water which will render it unsatisfactory for usage as a public drinking water supply.
3. The surface wastewater disposal system must not cause the lowering of the quality of the groundwater, as measured in the groundwater monitoring wells specified by this license, below the State Primary and Secondary Drinking Water Standards specified in the Maine State Drinking Water Regulations pursuant to *Drinking Water Regulations*, 22 M.R.S. § 2611. In the event that ground water monitoring results indicate lowering of the existing groundwater quality, the licensee may be required to take immediate remedial action(s), which may include but not limited to, adjustment of the irrigation schedule or application rates, a reduction of the pollutant loading, ground water remediation, or ceasing operation of the system until the groundwater attains applicable standards.
4. The Department must be notified as soon as the licensee becomes aware of any threat to public health, unlicensed discharge of wastewater, or any malfunction that threatens the proper operation of the system. Notification must be made in accordance with the attached Standard Condition #4 of this license.
5. The licensee must maintain a file on the location of all system components and relevant features. System components including collection pipes, tanks, manholes, pumps, pumping stations, spray disposal fields, and monitoring wells must be identified and referenced by a unique identifier (alphabetical, numeric or alpha-numeric) in all logs and reports. Each component must be mapped, and field located sufficiently to allow adequate inspections and monitoring by both the licensee and the Department.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

G. SPRAY IRRIGATION OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS, LOGS AND REPORTS

1. Wastewater may not be applied to areas without sufficient vegetation or ground cover as to prevent erosion or surface water runoff within or outside the designated boundaries of the spray fields. There must be no significant runoff within or out of the spray irrigation area due to the spray irrigation events.
2. At least 10 inches of separation from the ground surface to the groundwater table must be present prior to each spray irrigation event.
3. No wastewater must be applied to the site following a rainfall accumulation exceeding 1.0 inches within the previous 24-hour period. **A rain gauge must be located on site to monitor daily precipitation.** The licensee must also manage application rates by taking into consideration the forecast for rain events in the 48-hour period in the future.
4. No wastewater must be applied where there is snow present on the surface of the ground.
5. No wastewater must be applied when there is any evidence of frost or frozen ground within the upper 10 inches of the soil profile.
6. No traffic or equipment must be allowed in the spray-irrigation field except where installation occurs or where normal operations and maintenance are performed.
7. **Prior to the commencement of spray irrigation for the season,** the licensee must notify the Department's compliance inspector that they have verified that site conditions are appropriate (frozen ground, soil moisture etc) for spray irrigation.
8. The licensee must install the equivalent of one groundwater level inspection well per spray field to verify that 10 inches of separation from the ground surface to the observed groundwater level is present each day prior to spraying.
9. The licensee must at all times maintain in good working order and operate at maximum efficiency all wastewater collection, treatment and/or control facilities. Should significant malfunctions or leaks be detected, the licensee must shut down the malfunctioning portion of the spray system and make necessary repairs before resuming operation. The licensee must cease irrigation if runoff is observed outside the designated boundaries of the spray field.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

G. SPRAY IRRIGATION OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS, LOGS AND REPORTS

10. **The licensee must maintain a daily log of all spray irrigation operations** which records the date, weather, rainfall, areas irrigated, volume sprayed (gallons), application rates (daily and weekly), and other relevant observations/comments from daily inspections. The log must be in accordance with the general format of the "*Monthly Operations Log*" provided as **Attachment A** of this license, or other similar format approved by the Department. Weekly application rates must be reported in accordance with the general format of the "*Spray Application Report by Week*" provided as **Attachment B** of this license or other format as approved by the Department. The *Monthly Operations Log, and Spray Application Report by Week*, for each month must be submitted to the Department as an attachment to the monthly Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs) in a format approved by the Department. Copies will also be maintained on site for Department review and for license operation maintenance purposes.

H. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

1. The licensee must remove grasses and other vegetation such as shrubs and trees if necessary, so as not to impair the operation of the spray irrigation system, ensure uniform distribution of wastewater over the desired application area and to optimize nutrient uptake and removal.
2. The vegetative buffer zones along the perimeter of the site must be maintained to maximize vegetation and forest canopy density in order to minimize off-site drift of spray.

I. LAGOON MAINTENANCE

1. The integrity of the lagoon must be inspected periodically during the operating season and properly maintained at all times. There must be no overflow through or over the lagoon. Any signs of leaks or overflow must be repaired or corrected immediately.
2. **The licensee must maintain the lagoon freeboard at design levels or at least two (2) feet whichever is greater.** The lagoons must be operated in such a way as to balance the disposal of wastewater via spray irrigation and to ensure that design freeboard levels are maintained.
3. The lagoon must be cleaned of solid materials as necessary to maintain the proper operating depths of the lagoon tanks that will provide best practicable treatment of the wastewater. All material removed from the lagoon must be properly disposed of in accordance with all applicable State and Federal rules and regulations.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

J. INSPECTIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The licensee must periodically inspect all system components to ensure the facility is being operated and maintained in accordance with the design of the system. Maintenance logs must be maintained for each major system component including pumps, pump stations, storage tanks, spray apparatus, and pipes. At a minimum, the logs must include the unique identifier [alphabetic, numeric or alpha-numeric -see Special Condition F(5)], the date of maintenance, type of maintenance performed, names or person performing the maintenance, and other relevant system observations.

K. GROUND WATER MONITORING WELLS

1. All monitoring wells must be equipped and maintained with a cap and lock to limit access and must be maintained in a secured state at all times. The integrity of the monitoring wells must also be verified annually.
2. The Department reserves the right to require increasing the depth and or relocating any of the groundwater monitoring wells if the well is perennially dry or is determined not to be representative of groundwater conditions.

L. OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE (O & M) PLAN

This facility must have a current written comprehensive Operation & Maintenance (O & M) Plan. The plan must provide a systematic approach by which the licensee must at all times, properly operate and maintain all facilities and the systems of treatment and control (and related appurtenances) which are installed or used by the licensee to achieve compliance with the conditions of this license.

By December 31 of each year, or within 90 days of any process changes or minor equipment upgrades, the licensee must evaluate and modify the O& M Plan including site plan(s) and schematic(s) for the wastewater treatment facility to ensure that it is up-to-date. The O& M Plan must be kept on-site at all times and made available to the Department personnel upon request.

Within 90 days of completion of new and substantial upgrades of the wastewater treatment facility, the licensee must submit the updated O&M Plan to their Department inspector for review and comment.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

M. PESTICIDES

By December 31st [*ICIS ANNRP*] submit a list of pesticides used during the previous season. Between January 1st and May 31st [*ICIS code 07099*], following the use of Propiconazole or Methoxyfenozide during the previous season, the permittee must sample for these parameters in one groundwater monitoring well that is downgradient of the wastewater storage lagoon(s) at a frequency of once in a 5-year permit cycle. Propiconazole will be sampled and analyzed via USEPA Environmental Chemistry Method (*ECM*) *MRID 48697002* for water samples. Methoxyfenozide will be sampled and analyzed via USEPA ECM *MRID 49525703* for water samples. Alternatives to the stated methodology or use of a laboratory that is not certified by the State of Maine's Department of Health and Human Services must be approved by the Department.

The permittee must report sample results to the Department by June 15th, as an attachment to the May Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR). The Department, in conjunction with the Maine Department of Agriculture's Board of Pesticide Control, or other State and/or federal agency/organization with expertise in pesticides will evaluate the information submitted and determine if further testing is necessary.

N. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Electronic Reporting

NPDES Electronic Reporting, 40 C.F.R. 127, requires MEPDES permit holders to submit monitoring results obtained during the previous month on an electronic discharge monitoring report to the regulatory agency utilizing the USEPA electronic system.

Electronic Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs) submitted using the USEPA NetDMR system, must be:

1. Submitted by a facility authorized signatory; and
2. Submitted no later than midnight on the 15th day of the month following the completed reporting period.

Documentation submitted in support of the electronic DMR may be attached to the electronic DMR. Toxics reporting must be done using the DEP toxsheet reporting form. An electronic copy of the Toxsheet reporting document must be submitted to your department compliance inspector as an attachment to an email. In addition, a hardcopy form of this sheet must be signed and submitted to your compliance inspector, or a copy attached to your NetDMR submittal will suffice. Documentation submitted electronically to the Department in support of the electronic DMR must be submitted no later than midnight on the 15th day of the month following the completed reporting period.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

N. MONITORING AND REPORTING (cont'd)

A signed copy of the DMR and all other reports required herein must be submitted to the Department assigned compliance inspector (unless otherwise specified) following address:

Department of Environmental Protection
Eastern Maine Regional Office
Bureau of Water Quality
106 Hogan Road
Bangor, Maine 04401

O. REOPENING OF LICENSE FOR MODIFICATIONS

In accordance with 38 M.R.S. § 414-A(5) and upon evaluation of the tests results or monitoring requirements specified in Special Conditions of this licensing action, new site specific information, or any other pertinent test results or information obtained during the term of this permit, the Department may, at any time and with notice to the permittee, modify this permit to: 1) include effluent limits necessary to control specific pollutants or whole effluent toxicity where there is a reasonable potential that the effluent may cause water quality criteria to be exceeded, (2) require additional monitoring if results on file are inconclusive; or (3) change monitoring requirements or limitations based on new information.

P. SEVERABILITY

In the event that any provision, or part thereof, of this license is declared to be unlawful by a reviewing court, the remainder of the license must remain in full force and effect and must be construed and enforced in all respects as if such unlawful provision, or part thereof, had been omitted, unless otherwise ordered by the court.

MAINE WASTE DISCHARGE LICENSE

FACT SHEET

December 13, 2022

COMPLIANCE TRACKING NUMBER: **MEU507792**

LICENSE NUMBER: **W0077592-5P-E-R**

NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS OF APPLICANT:

**MERRILL BLUBERRY FARMS, INC.
P.O. Box 149
Ellsworth, Maine 04605**

COUNTY: **HANCOCK COUNTY**

NAME AND ADDRESS OF FACILITY:

**MERRILL BLUEBERRY FARMS
63 Thorsen Road
Hancock, Maine, 04640**

RECEIVING WATER/ CLASSIFICATION: **GROUND WATER/CLASS GW-A**

COGNIZANT OFFICIAL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER: **Mr. Lee Johnston, Vice President
(207) 667-9750**

e-mail: merrblue@merrillwildblueberries.com

1. APPLICATION SUMMARY

- a. Application: On February 20, 2020 Merrill Blueberry Farms Inc. (Merrill) submitted an application to the Department of Environmental Protection (Department) for the renewal of Waste Discharge License (WDL/license) W007792-5P-D-R, issued by the Department on May 13, 2015. The 5/13/15 WDL authorized the operation of a surface wastewater disposal (spray irrigation) system for blueberry processing and wash down wastewater generated at a rate of 72,000 gallons per day. The WDL authorized the licensee to apply wastewater to the spray irrigation fields at a rate of no greater than 2.5 inches per week (~67,881 gallons per acre per week) for a total maximum of 746,691 gallons per week over the entire 11-acre spray irrigation area. See **Attachment A** of this Fact Sheet for a location map.

1. APPLICATION SUMMARY (cont'd)

- b. Source Description: Each year Merrill processes five to six million pounds of fresh blueberries. These berries are brought in directly from the field, processed and put in storage for sale and transportation at a later date. The berries are processed by four distinct categories: Fresh Intake, Upper-Level Processing, Freezing, and Lower-Level Processing. The origin of the wastewater is process related, floor drain wastewater, and defrost/cooling water. Merrill's wastewater contains less contaminants than wastewater from other blueberry processing plants as its process wastewater does not contain sugar added for floatation purposes.
- c. Wastewater Treatment: Merrill's currently spray irrigates approximately 1.3 million gallons of wastewater per year due to processing during the blueberry harvest season. The harvest season typically takes place during the months of August and early September. Discharge and monitoring of plant effluent can, on occasion, last to early October. Wastewater is generated through the defrosting of plant freezers, and from the wash down of process equipment. This water contains particles such as grit, stems, seeds, and berry plant parts, as well as minimal amounts of chlorine and fugitive oil material. All process wastewater arrives to the lagoon through two main discharge lines. Prior to discharge all water is directed through a #30 mesh screen located near the lagoon. The screen removes larger particles which would likely settle in the lagoon, taking up valuable lagoon volume. The material that does pass through the screen tends to settle in the lagoon and is removed from the lagoon every 2 years.

Disposal of process water is through spray irrigation and encompasses 11 acres distributed through eight spray nozzles. Each spray nozzle has an effective spray diameter of 300 feet. Soils are identified as Colton series which is excessively drained and suitable for slow rate land application for treatment and attenuation of the wastewater. See **Attachment B** of this Fact sheet for a layout of the spray irrigation system.

2. LICENSE SUMMARY

- a. Terms and Conditions: This licensing action carries forward all the terms and conditions of the previous license except that this license:
 - 1. Revises Special Condition M. Pesticides and requires the permittee to submit a list of pesticides used during the previous season and institute sampling January 1st–May 31st following the use of Propiconazole or Methoxyfenozide during the previous season. Special Condition M also requires the permittee to sample for these parameters in one groundwater monitoring well that is downgradient of the wastewater storage lagoon(s) at a frequency of once in a 5-year permit cycle.
 - 2. Combines Groundwater Monitoring Wells GW11 & GW21 as they are sampled from the same internal point.

2. LICENSE SUMMARY (cont'd)

- b. History: This section provides a summary of significant licensing/licensing actions and milestones that have been completed for the licensee.

October 26, 2004-- The Department issued WDL #W007792-5P-B-R to Merrill Blueberry Farms for a five-year term.

December 8, 2009-- The Department issued WDL #W007792-5P-C-R to Merrill Blueberry Farms for a five-year term.

December 9, 2014--Merrill submitted a complete application to the Department to renew WDL W007792-5P-C-R.

May 13, 2015-- The Department issued WDL #W007792-5P-D-R to Merrill Blueberry Farms for a five-year term.

February 20, 2020--Merrill submitted a complete application to the Department to renew WDL W007792-5P-D-R.

3. CONDITIONS OF LICENSE

Conditions of licenses, 38 M.R.S. § 414 A, requires that the effluent limitations prescribed for discharges, including, but not limited to, effluent toxicity, require application of best practicable treatment (BPT), be consistent with applicable state law, and ensure that the receiving waters attain the State water quality standards as described in *Maine's Water Classification System*. In addition, Certain deposits and discharges prohibited, 38 M.R.S. § 420 and Surface Water Toxics Control Program, 06-096 CMR 530 (effective October 9, 2005) require the regulation of toxic substances not to exceed levels set forth in *Surface Water Quality Criteria for Toxic Pollutants*, 06-096 CMR 584 (amended February 16, 2020), and that ensure safe levels for the discharge of toxic pollutants such that existing and designated uses of surface waters are maintained and protected.

4. RECEIVING WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

Classification of ground water, 38 M.R.S. § 470 states "All ground water must be classified as not less than Class GW-A, except as otherwise provided in this section." *Standards of classification of ground water*, 38 M.R.S. § 465-C(1) contains the standards for the classification of ground water. "Class GW-A must be the highest classification and must be of such quality that it can be used for public drinking water supplies. These waters must be free of radioactive matter or any matter that imparts color, turbidity, taste or odor which would impair usages of these waters, other than that occurring from natural phenomena."

5. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Groundwater Monitoring

During the previous licensing period four groundwater monitoring wells were monitored. The approximate locations within the spray-irrigation fields and around the lagoons are shown on a plan attached to this Fact Sheet. The monitoring wells are:

Monitoring Wells	Location
GW-11	Northerly of the processing plant.
GW-21	Adjacent to the processing plant between the lagoon and plant.
GW-31	Southerly of the plant.
GW-41	Easterly of spray irrigation site.

GW11 & GW21 are monitored from the same point inside the facility. The Department is combining both wells in this licensing action since it is currently impossible to differentiate sampling between the two and is not economically feasible to create a separate sampling point. GW31 & GW 41 are monitored from outside taps. The Department is removing the requirement to monitor depth to groundwater in this licensing action.

Monitoring Parameters

Slow rate land irrigation treatment is an environmentally sound and appropriate technology for best practicable treatment and disposal of wastewater. The theory behind surface wastewater disposal systems is to utilize the top 10-12 inches of organic matter and in-situ soils to attenuate the pollutant loadings in the applied wastewaters. The soils and vegetation within the spray field area will provide adequate filtration and absorption to preserve the integrity of the soil, and both surface and ground water quality in the area.

The applicant must periodically monitor the spray irrigation field and the groundwater monitoring locations at the specified frequencies and locations as called for in Special Condition A of this license.

- a. *Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD₅)* –BOD is the rate at which organisms use the oxygen in wastewater while stabilizing decomposable organic matter under aerobic conditions. BOD measurements indicate the organic strength of wastes in water. The Department has established a “Report” requirement at this time for BOD while reserving the possibility to establish a numeric limit in the future based on BPT technology or other relevant factors. Monitoring for BOD yields an indication of the effectiveness of the lagoon treatment process and the condition of the wastewater being applied.

5. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (cont'd)

- b. *pH* - pH is considered a “field” parameter meaning that it is measured directly in the field via instrumentation and does not require laboratory analysis. It is considered a surveillance level monitoring parameter that is used as an early-warning indicator of potential ground water contamination and is carried forward from the previous licensing action.
- c. *Specific Conductance* – Like pH, specific conductance is considered a “field” parameter, meaning that it is measured directly in the field via instrumentation and does not require laboratory analysis. It is considered a surveillance level monitoring parameter that is used as an early-warning indicator of potential ground water or surface water contamination and is being carried forward from the previous licensing action.
- d. *Insecticides, Fungicides, Herbicides (collectively referred to as pesticides* – The licensee is required to submit a list of pesticides used during the previous season and institute sampling January 1st–May 31st following the use of Propiconazole or Methoxyfenozide during the previous season. The licensee is also required to sample for these parameters in one groundwater monitoring well that is downgradient of the wastewater storage lagoon(s) at a frequency of once in a 5-year license cycle
- e. *Application Rates (Weekly)* – The weekly maximum rate of 2,443,500 gallons per week (3.0 inches per week) is being carried forward from the previous licensing action. The weekly limit is based on the characteristics of in-situ soils.
- f. *Nitrate-nitrogen* – Nitrogen assumes different forms depending upon the oxidation-reduction conditions in the soil and ground water. The presence of a particular form of nitrogen indicates the nutrient attenuation capacity of the spray site. The Department considers the required monitoring for various forms of nitrogen in ground water and soils to provide accurate and sufficient analysis of site conditions and effects from the treatment process. The monitoring well sampling can also help identify chronic leakage from the lagoon or overloading of the spray sites. The spray area soil sampling requirement addresses the efficiency of the soils in attenuating the pollutant loading, helping to safeguard against exceeding the ability for plant uptake which would result in accumulation of excess nitrogen in the soils. Nitrogen compounds can indicate human health concerns if elevated in a drinking water supply. The 10 mg/l limit for nitrate nitrogen in monitoring wells is based on state and federal drinking water standards.

5. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (cont'd)

- g. *Depth to Water Level Below Land Surface* – Measuring the distance from the ground level to the ground water surface in monitoring wells will be used to monitor representative groundwater conditions.
- h. *Temperature* – Temperature is considered a “field” parameter, meaning that it is measured directly in the field via instrumentation and does not require laboratory analysis. It is considered a surveillance level monitoring parameter that is used as an early-warning indicator of potential ground water contamination and is being carried forward from the previous licensing action.

6. HISTORICAL MONITORING RESULTS

Below is a summary of the storage tank effluent and groundwater monitoring test results and spray application rates for the period April 2015 – April 2022

a. Lagoon Effluent (Outfall 001)

pH (standard units) (#DMR's = 7)

Value	Limit (s.u)	Range (s.u)
Daily Maximum	Report	4.3 – 6.5

Specific Conductance (umhos/cm) (#DMR's = 7)

Value	Limit (umhos/cm)	Range (umhos/cm)	Avg. (umhos/cm)
Daily Maximum	Report	310 - 940	521

Nitrate-Nitrogen (mg/L) (#DMR's = 7)

Value	Limit (mg/L)	Range (mg/L)	Average (mg/L)
Daily Maximum	Report	<0.05	<0.05

6. HISTORICAL MONITORING RESULTS (cont'd)

b. Spray application rates

Weekly Average Rate (gal/week) (#DMR's = 23)

Value	Limit (gal/week)	Range (gal/week)	Average (gal/acre)
Weekly average	746,691	54,120 – 2,092,160	511,032.74

7. SYSTEM CALIBRATION

Discharge rates, application rates and uniformity of application change over time as equipment gets older and components wear, or if the system is operated differently from the assumed design. Operating below design pressure greatly reduces the coverage diameter and application uniformity (resulting in increased ponding). For these reasons, the licensee should field calibrate their equipment on a regular basis to ensure proper application and uniformity, and when operating conditions are changed from the assumed design.

8. IMPACT ON RECEIVING WATER QUALITY

As licensed, the Department has determined the existing water uses will be maintained and protected and the discharge will not cause or contribute to the failure of the water body to meet standards for Class GW-A classification.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public notice of this application was made in the Ellsworth American newspaper on or about February 13, 2020. The Department receives public comments on an application until the date a final agency action is taken on the application. Those persons receiving copies of draft licenses must have at least 30 days in which to submit comments on the draft or to request a public hearing, pursuant to *Application Processing Procedures for Waste Discharge Licenses*, 06-096 CMR 522 (effective January 12, 2001).

10. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Additional information concerning this licensing action may be obtained from and written comments should be sent to:

Rod Robert
Division of Water Quality Management
Bureau of Water Quality
Department of Environmental Protection
17 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0017 Telephone: (207) 680-0576
rodney.robert@maine.gov

11. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The Department did not receive comments from the general public or other interested parties regarding the permit, therefore, a formal Response to Comment has not been prepared.

ATTACHMENT A

This is a detailed topographic map of the Hancock, Maine area. The map features contour lines indicating elevation, with major peaks like Beckwith Hill and Buttermilk Hill labeled. Key locations include Hancock, Maine, and the 'SITE' marked with a star near the golf course and McFarland Hill Cemetery. The map also shows several gravel pits, a water tank, a radio tower, and various roads including Central Road and Main Road. The coastline of the Atlantic Ocean is visible on the right side of the map.

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ATTACHMENT B

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

CONTENTS

SECTION	TOPIC	PAGE
A	GENERAL PROVISIONS	
1	General compliance	2
2	Other materials	2
3	Duty to Comply	2
4	Duty to provide information	2
5	Permit actions	2
6	Reopener clause	2
7	Oil and hazardous substances	2
8	Property rights	3
9	Confidentiality	3
10	Duty to reapply	3
11	Other laws	3
12	Inspection and entry	3
B	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES	
1	General facility requirements	3
2	Proper operation and maintenance	4
3	Need to halt reduce not a defense	4
4	Duty to mitigate	4
5	Bypasses	4
6	Upsets	5
C	MONITORING AND RECORDS	
1	General requirements	6
2	Representative sampling	6
3	Monitoring and records	6
D	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	
1	Reporting requirements	7
2	Signatory requirement	8
3	Availability of reports	8
4	Existing manufacturing, commercial, mining, and silvicultural dischargers	8
5	Publicly owned treatment works	9
E	OTHER PROVISIONS	
1	Emergency action - power failure	9
2	Spill prevention	10
3	Removed substances	10
4	Connection to municipal sewer	10
F	DEFINITIONS	10

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. General compliance. All discharges shall be consistent with the terms and conditions of this permit; any changes in production capacity or process modifications which result in changes in the quantity or the characteristics of the discharge must be authorized by an additional license or by modifications of this permit; it shall be a violation of the terms and conditions of this permit to discharge any pollutant not identified and authorized herein or to discharge in excess of the rates or quantities authorized herein or to violate any other conditions of this permit.

2. Other materials. Other materials ordinarily produced or used in the operation of this facility, which have been specifically identified in the application, may be discharged at the maximum frequency and maximum level identified in the application, provided:

- (a) They are not
 - (i) Designated as toxic or hazardous under the provisions of Sections 307 and 311, respectively, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; Title 38, Section 420, Maine Revised Statutes; or other applicable State Law; or
 - (ii) Known to be hazardous or toxic by the licensee.
- (b) The discharge of such materials will not violate applicable water quality standards.

3. Duty to comply. The permittee must comply with all conditions of this permit. Any permit noncompliance constitutes a violation of State law and the Clean Water Act and is grounds for enforcement action; for permit termination, revocation and reissuance, or modification; or denial of a permit renewal application.

- (a) The permittee shall comply with effluent standards or prohibitions established under section 307(a) of the Clean Water Act, and 38 MRSA, §420 or Chapter 530.5 for toxic pollutants within the time provided in the regulations that establish these standards or prohibitions, even if the permit has not yet been modified to incorporate the requirement.
- (b) Any person who violates any provision of the laws administered by the Department, including without limitation, a violation of the terms of any order, rule license, permit, approval or decision of the Board or Commissioner is subject to the penalties set forth in 38 MRSA, §349.

4. Duty to provide information. The permittee shall furnish to the Department, within a reasonable time, any information which the Department may request to determine whether cause exists for modifying, revoking and reissuing, or terminating this permit or to determine compliance with this permit. The permittee shall also furnish to the Department upon request, copies of records required to be kept by this permit.

5. Permit actions. This permit may be modified, revoked and reissued, or terminated for cause. The filing of a request by the permittee for a permit modification, revocation and reissuance, or termination, or a notification of planned changes or anticipated noncompliance does not stay any permit condition.

6. Reopener clause. The Department reserves the right to make appropriate revisions to this permit in order to establish any appropriate effluent limitations, schedule of compliance or other provisions which may be authorized under 38 MRSA, §414-A(5).

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

7. Oil and hazardous substances. Nothing in this permit shall be construed to preclude the institution of any legal action or relieve the permittee from any responsibilities, liabilities or penalties to which the permittee is or may be subject under section 311 of the Federal Clean Water Act; section 106 of the Federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980; or 38 MRSA §§ 1301, et. seq.

8. Property rights. This permit does not convey any property rights of any sort, or any exclusive privilege.

9. Confidentiality of records. 38 MRSA §414(6) reads as follows. "Any records, reports or information obtained under this subchapter is available to the public, except that upon a showing satisfactory to the department by any person that any records, reports or information, or particular part or any record, report or information, other than the names and addresses of applicants, license applications, licenses, and effluent data, to which the department has access under this subchapter would, if made public, divulge methods or processes that are entitled to protection as trade secrets, these records, reports or information must be confidential and not available for public inspection or examination. Any records, reports or information may be disclosed to employees or authorized representatives of the State or the United States concerned with carrying out this subchapter or any applicable federal law, and to any party to a hearing held under this section on terms the commissioner may prescribe in order to protect these confidential records, reports and information, as long as this disclosure is material and relevant to any issue under consideration by the department."

10. Duty to reapply. If the permittee wishes to continue an activity regulated by this permit after the expiration date of this permit, the permittee must apply for and obtain a new permit.

11. Other laws. The issuance of this permit does not authorize any injury to persons or property or invasion of other property rights, nor does it relieve the permittee of its obligation to comply with other applicable Federal, State or local laws and regulations.

12. Inspection and entry. The permittee shall allow the Department, or an authorized representative (including an authorized contractor acting as a representative of the EPA Administrator), upon presentation of credentials and other documents as may be required by law, to:

- (a) Enter upon the permittee's premises where a regulated facility or activity is located or conducted, or where records must be kept under the conditions of this permit;
- (b) Have access to and copy, at reasonable times, any records that must be kept under the conditions of this permit;
- (c) Inspect at reasonable times any facilities, equipment (including monitoring and control equipment), practices, or operations regulated or required under this permit; and
- (d) Sample or monitor at reasonable times, for the purposes of assuring permit compliance or as otherwise authorized by the Clean Water Act, any substances or parameters at any location.

B. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES

1. General facility requirements.

- (a) The permittee shall collect all waste flows designated by the Department as requiring treatment and discharge them into an approved waste treatment facility in such a manner as to

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

- maximize removal of pollutants unless authorization to the contrary is obtained from the Department.
- (b) The permittee shall at all times maintain in good working order and operate at maximum efficiency all waste water collection, treatment and/or control facilities.
 - (c) All necessary waste treatment facilities will be installed and operational prior to the discharge of any wastewaters.
 - (d) Final plans and specifications must be submitted to the Department for review prior to the construction or modification of any treatment facilities.
 - (e) The permittee shall install flow measuring facilities of a design approved by the Department.
 - (f) The permittee must provide an outfall of a design approved by the Department which is placed in the receiving waters in such a manner that the maximum mixing and dispersion of the wastewaters will be achieved as rapidly as possible.

2. Proper operation and maintenance. The permittee shall at all times properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control (and related appurtenances) which are installed or used by the permittee to achieve compliance with the conditions of this permit. Proper operation and maintenance also includes adequate laboratory controls and appropriate quality assurance procedures. This provision requires the operation of back-up or auxiliary facilities or similar systems which are installed by a permittee only when the operation is necessary to achieve compliance with the conditions of the permit.

3. Need to halt or reduce activity not a defense. It shall not be a defense for a permittee in an enforcement action that it would have been necessary to halt or reduce the permitted activity in order to maintain compliance with the conditions of this permit.

4. Duty to mitigate. The permittee shall take all reasonable steps to minimize or prevent any discharge or sludge use or disposal in violation of this permit which has a reasonable likelihood of adversely affecting human health or the environment.

5. Bypasses.

- (a) Definitions.
 - (i) Bypass means the intentional diversion of waste streams from any portion of a treatment facility.
 - (ii) Severe property damage means substantial physical damage to property, damage to the treatment facilities which causes them to become inoperable, or substantial and permanent loss of natural resources which can reasonably be expected to occur in the absence of a bypass. Severe property damage does not mean economic loss caused by delays in production.
- (b) Bypass not exceeding limitations. The permittee may allow any bypass to occur which does not cause effluent limitations to be exceeded, but only if it also is for essential maintenance to assure efficient operation. These bypasses are not subject to the provisions of paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section.
- (c) Notice.
 - (i) Anticipated bypass. If the permittee knows in advance of the need for a bypass, it shall submit prior notice, if possible at least ten days before the date of the bypass.

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

- (ii) Unanticipated bypass. The permittee shall submit notice of an unanticipated bypass as required in paragraph D(1)(f), below. (24-hour notice).
- (d) Prohibition of bypass.
 - (i) Bypass is prohibited, and the Department may take enforcement action against a permittee for bypass, unless:
 - (A) Bypass was unavoidable to prevent loss of life, personal injury, or severe property damage;
 - (B) There were no feasible alternatives to the bypass, such as the use of auxiliary treatment facilities, retention of untreated wastes, or maintenance during normal periods of equipment downtime. This condition is not satisfied if adequate back-up equipment should have been installed in the exercise of reasonable engineering judgment to prevent a bypass which occurred during normal periods of equipment downtime or preventive maintenance; and
 - (C) The permittee submitted notices as required under paragraph (c) of this section.
 - (ii) The Department may approve an anticipated bypass, after considering its adverse effects, if the Department determines that it will meet the three conditions listed above in paragraph (d)(i) of this section.

6. Upsets.

- (a) Definition. Upset means an exceptional incident in which there is unintentional and temporary noncompliance with technology based permit effluent limitations because of factors beyond the reasonable control of the permittee. An upset does not include noncompliance to the extent caused by operational error, improperly designed treatment facilities, inadequate treatment facilities, lack of preventive maintenance, or careless or improper operation.
- (b) Effect of an upset. An upset constitutes an affirmative defense to an action brought for noncompliance with such technology based permit effluent limitations if the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section are met. No determination made during administrative review of claims that noncompliance was caused by upset, and before an action for noncompliance, is final administrative action subject to judicial review.
- (c) Conditions necessary for a demonstration of upset. A permittee who wishes to establish the affirmative defense of upset shall demonstrate, through properly signed, contemporaneous operating logs, or other relevant evidence that:
 - (i) An upset occurred and that the permittee can identify the cause(s) of the upset;
 - (ii) The permitted facility was at the time being properly operated; and
 - (iii) The permittee submitted notice of the upset as required in paragraph D(1)(f) , below. (24 hour notice).
 - (iv) The permittee complied with any remedial measures required under paragraph B(4).
- (d) Burden of proof. In any enforcement proceeding the permittee seeking to establish the occurrence of an upset has the burden of proof.

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

C. MONITORING AND RECORDS

1. General Requirements. This permit shall be subject to such monitoring requirements as may be reasonably required by the Department including the installation, use and maintenance of monitoring equipment or methods (including, where appropriate, biological monitoring methods). The permittee shall provide the Department with periodic reports on the proper Department reporting form of monitoring results obtained pursuant to the monitoring requirements contained herein.

2. Representative sampling. Samples and measurements taken as required herein shall be representative of the volume and nature of the monitored discharge. If effluent limitations are based wholly or partially on quantities of a product processed, the permittee shall ensure samples are representative of times when production is taking place. Where discharge monitoring is required when production is less than 50%, the resulting data shall be reported as a daily measurement but not included in computation of averages, unless specifically authorized by the Department.

3. Monitoring and records.

- (a) Samples and measurements taken for the purpose of monitoring shall be representative of the monitored activity.
- (b) Except for records of monitoring information required by this permit related to the permittee's sewage sludge use and disposal activities, which shall be retained for a period of at least five years, the permittee shall retain records of all monitoring information, including all calibration and maintenance records and all original strip chart recordings for continuous monitoring instrumentation, copies of all reports required by this permit, and records of all data used to complete the application for this permit, for a period of at least 3 years from the date of the sample, measurement, report or application. This period may be extended by request of the Department at any time.
- (c) Records of monitoring information shall include:
 - (i) The date, exact place, and time of sampling or measurements;
 - (ii) The individual(s) who performed the sampling or measurements;
 - (iii) The date(s) analyses were performed;
 - (iv) The individual(s) who performed the analyses;
 - (v) The analytical techniques or methods used; and
 - (vi) The results of such analyses.
- (d) Monitoring results must be conducted according to test procedures approved under 40 CFR part 136, unless other test procedures have been specified in the permit.
- (e) State law provides that any person who tampers with or renders inaccurate any monitoring devices or method required by any provision of law, or any order, rule license, permit approval or decision is subject to the penalties set forth in 38 MRSA, §349.

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

D. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Reporting requirements.

- (a) Planned changes. The permittee shall give notice to the Department as soon as possible of any planned physical alterations or additions to the permitted facility. Notice is required only when:
 - (i) The alteration or addition to a permitted facility may meet one of the criteria for determining whether a facility is a new source in 40 CFR 122.29(b); or
 - (ii) The alteration or addition could significantly change the nature or increase the quantity of pollutants discharged. This notification applies to pollutants which are subject neither to effluent limitations in the permit, nor to notification requirements under Section D(4).
 - (iii) The alteration or addition results in a significant change in the permittee's sludge use or disposal practices, and such alteration, addition, or change may justify the application of permit conditions that are different from or absent in the existing permit, including notification of additional use or disposal sites not reported during the permit application process or not reported pursuant to an approved land application plan;
- (b) Anticipated noncompliance. The permittee shall give advance notice to the Department of any planned changes in the permitted facility or activity which may result in noncompliance with permit requirements.
- (c) Transfers. This permit is not transferable to any person except upon application to and approval of the Department pursuant to 38 MRSA, § 344 and Chapters 2 and 522.
- (d) Monitoring reports. Monitoring results shall be reported at the intervals specified elsewhere in this permit.
 - (i) Monitoring results must be reported on a Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) or forms provided or specified by the Department for reporting results of monitoring of sludge use or disposal practices.
 - (ii) If the permittee monitors any pollutant more frequently than required by the permit using test procedures approved under 40 CFR part 136 or as specified in the permit, the results of this monitoring shall be included in the calculation and reporting of the data submitted in the DMR or sludge reporting form specified by the Department.
 - (iii) Calculations for all limitations which require averaging of measurements shall utilize an arithmetic mean unless otherwise specified by the Department in the permit.
- (e) Compliance schedules. Reports of compliance or noncompliance with, or any progress reports on, interim and final requirements contained in any compliance schedule of this permit shall be submitted no later than 14 days following each schedule date.
- (f) Twenty-four hour reporting.
 - (i) The permittee shall report any noncompliance which may endanger health or the environment. Any information shall be provided orally within 24 hours from the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances. A written submission shall also be provided within 5 days of the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances. The written submission shall contain a description of the noncompliance and its cause; the period of noncompliance, including exact dates and times, and if the noncompliance

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

has not been corrected, the anticipated time it is expected to continue; and steps taken or planned to reduce, eliminate, and prevent reoccurrence of the noncompliance.

- (ii) The following shall be included as information which must be reported within 24 hours under this paragraph.

- (A) Any unanticipated bypass which exceeds any effluent limitation in the permit.

- (B) Any upset which exceeds any effluent limitation in the permit.

- (C) Violation of a maximum daily discharge limitation for any of the pollutants listed by the Department in the permit to be reported within 24 hours.

- (iii) The Department may waive the written report on a case-by-case basis for reports under paragraph (f)(ii) of this section if the oral report has been received within 24 hours.

- (g) Other noncompliance. The permittee shall report all instances of noncompliance not reported under paragraphs (d), (e), and (f) of this section, at the time monitoring reports are submitted. The reports shall contain the information listed in paragraph (f) of this section.

- (h) Other information. Where the permittee becomes aware that it failed to submit any relevant facts in a permit application, or submitted incorrect information in a permit application or in any report to the Department, it shall promptly submit such facts or information.

2. Signatory requirement. All applications, reports, or information submitted to the Department shall be signed and certified as required by Chapter 521, Section 5 of the Department's rules. State law provides that any person who knowingly makes any false statement, representation or certification in any application, record, report, plan or other document filed or required to be maintained by any order, rule, permit, approval or decision of the Board or Commissioner is subject to the penalties set forth in 38 MRSA, §349.

3. Availability of reports. Except for data determined to be confidential under A(9), above, all reports prepared in accordance with the terms of this permit shall be available for public inspection at the offices of the Department. As required by State law, effluent data shall not be considered confidential. Knowingly making any false statement on any such report may result in the imposition of criminal sanctions as provided by law.

4. Existing manufacturing, commercial, mining, and silvicultural dischargers. In addition to the reporting requirements under this Section, all existing manufacturing, commercial, mining, and silvicultural dischargers must notify the Department as soon as they know or have reason to believe:

- (a) That any activity has occurred or will occur which would result in the discharge, on a routine or frequent basis, of any toxic pollutant which is not limited in the permit, if that discharge will exceed the highest of the following "notification levels":

- (i) One hundred micrograms per liter (100 ug/l);

- (ii) Two hundred micrograms per liter (200 ug/l) for acrolein and acrylonitrile; five hundred micrograms per liter (500 ug/l) for 2,4-dinitrophenol and for 2-methyl-4,6-dinitrophenol; and one milligram per liter (1 mg/l) for antimony;

- (iii) Five (5) times the maximum concentration value reported for that pollutant in the permit application in accordance with Chapter 521 Section 4(g)(7); or

- (iv) The level established by the Department in accordance with Chapter 523 Section 5(f).

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

- (b) That any activity has occurred or will occur which would result in any discharge, on a non-routine or infrequent basis, of a toxic pollutant which is not limited in the permit, if that discharge will exceed the highest of the following "notification levels":
 - (i) Five hundred micrograms per liter (500 ug/l);
 - (ii) One milligram per liter (1 mg/l) for antimony;
 - (iii) Ten (10) times the maximum concentration value reported for that pollutant in the permit application in accordance with Chapter 521 Section 4(g)(7); or
 - (iv) The level established by the Department in accordance with Chapter 523 Section 5(f).

5. Publicly owned treatment works.

- (a) All POTWs must provide adequate notice to the Department of the following:
 - (i) Any new introduction of pollutants into the POTW from an indirect discharger which would be subject to section 301 or 306 of CWA or Chapter 528 if it were directly discharging those pollutants.
 - (ii) Any substantial change in the volume or character of pollutants being introduced into that POTW by a source introducing pollutants into the POTW at the time of issuance of the permit.
 - (iii) For purposes of this paragraph, adequate notice shall include information on (A) the quality and quantity of effluent introduced into the POTW, and (B) any anticipated impact of the change on the quantity or quality of effluent to be discharged from the POTW.
- (b) When the effluent discharged by a POTW for a period of three consecutive months exceeds 80 percent of the permitted flow, the permittee shall submit to the Department a projection of loadings up to the time when the design capacity of the treatment facility will be reached, and a program for maintaining satisfactory treatment levels consistent with approved water quality management plans.

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. Emergency action - power failure. Within thirty days after the effective date of this permit, the permittee shall notify the Department of facilities and plans to be used in the event the primary source of power to its wastewater pumping and treatment facilities fails as follows.

- (a) For municipal sources. During power failure, all wastewaters which are normally treated shall receive a minimum of primary treatment and disinfection. Unless otherwise approved, alternate power supplies shall be provided for pumping stations and treatment facilities. Alternate power supplies shall be on-site generating units or an outside power source which is separate and independent from sources used for normal operation of the wastewater facilities.
- (b) For industrial and commercial sources. The permittee shall either maintain an alternative power source sufficient to operate the wastewater pumping and treatment facilities or halt, reduce or otherwise control production and or all discharges upon reduction or loss of power to the wastewater pumping or treatment facilities.

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

2. Spill prevention. (applicable only to industrial sources) Within six months of the effective date of this permit, the permittee shall submit to the Department for review and approval, with or without conditions, a spill prevention plan. The plan shall delineate methods and measures to be taken to prevent and or contain any spills of pulp, chemicals, oils or other contaminants and shall specify means of disposal and or treatment to be used.

3. Removed substances. Solids, sludges trash rack cleanings, filter backwash, or other pollutants removed from or resulting from the treatment or control of waste waters shall be disposed of in a manner approved by the Department.

4. Connection to municipal sewer. (applicable only to industrial and commercial sources) All wastewaters designated by the Department as treatable in a municipal treatment system will be cosigned to that system when it is available. This permit will expire 90 days after the municipal treatment facility becomes available, unless this time is extended by the Department in writing.

F. DEFINITIONS. For the purposes of this permit, the following definitions shall apply. Other definitions applicable to this permit may be found in Chapters 520 through 529 of the Department's rules

Average means the arithmetic mean of values taken at the frequency required for each parameter over the specified period. For bacteria, the average shall be the geometric mean.

Average monthly discharge limitation means the highest allowable average of daily discharges over a calendar month, calculated as the sum of all daily discharges measured during a calendar month divided by the number of daily discharges measured during that month. Except, however, bacteriological tests may be calculated as a geometric mean.

Average weekly discharge limitation means the highest allowable average of daily discharges over a calendar week, calculated as the sum of all daily discharges measured during a calendar week divided by the number of daily discharges measured during that week.

Best management practices ("BMPs") means schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and other management practices to prevent or reduce the pollution of waters of the State. BMPs also include treatment requirements, operating procedures, and practices to control plant site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or waste disposal, or drainage from raw material storage.

Composite sample means a sample consisting of a minimum of eight grab samples collected at equal intervals during a 24 hour period (or a lesser period as specified in the section on monitoring and reporting) and combined proportional to the flow over that same time period.

Continuous discharge means a discharge which occurs without interruption throughout the operating hours of the facility, except for infrequent shutdowns for maintenance, process changes, or other similar activities.

Daily discharge means the discharge of a pollutant measured during a calendar day or any 24-hour period that reasonably represents the calendar day for purposes of sampling. For pollutants with limitations expressed in units of mass, the daily discharge is calculated as the total mass of the pollutant discharged over the day. For pollutants with limitations expressed in other units of measurement, the daily discharge is calculated as the average measurement of the pollutant over the day.

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

Discharge Monitoring Report ("DMR") means the EPA uniform national form, including any subsequent additions, revisions, or modifications for the reporting of self-monitoring results by permittees. DMRs must be used by approved States as well as by EPA. EPA will supply DMRs to any approved State upon request. The EPA national forms may be modified to substitute the State Agency name, address, logo, and other similar information, as appropriate, in place of EPA's.

Flow weighted composite sample means a composite sample consisting of a mixture of aliquots collected at a constant time interval, where the volume of each aliquot is proportional to the flow rate of the discharge.

Grab sample means an individual sample collected in a period of less than 15 minutes.

Interference means a Discharge which, alone or in conjunction with a discharge or discharges from other sources, both:

- (1) Inhibits or disrupts the POTW, its treatment processes or operations, or its sludge processes, use or disposal; and
- (2) Therefore is a cause of a violation of any requirement of the POTW's NPDES permit (including an increase in the magnitude or duration of a violation) or of the prevention of sewage sludge use or disposal in compliance with the following statutory provisions and regulations or permits issued thereunder (or more stringent State or local regulations): Section 405 of the Clean Water Act, the Solid Waste Disposal Act (SWDA) (including title II, more commonly referred to as the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and including State regulations contained in any State sludge management plan prepared pursuant to subtitle D of the SWDA), the Clean Air Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act, and the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act.

Maximum daily discharge limitation means the highest allowable daily discharge.

New source means any building, structure, facility, or installation from which there is or may be a discharge of pollutants, the construction of which commenced:

- (a) After promulgation of standards of performance under section 306 of CWA which are applicable to such source, or
- (b) After proposal of standards of performance in accordance with section 306 of CWA which are applicable to such source, but only if the standards are promulgated in accordance with section 306 within 120 days of their proposal.

Pass through means a discharge which exits the POTW into waters of the State in quantities or concentrations which, alone or in conjunction with a discharge or discharges from other sources, is a cause of a violation of any requirement of the POTW's NPDES permit (including an increase in the magnitude or duration of a violation).

Permit means an authorization, license, or equivalent control document issued by EPA or an approved State to implement the requirements of 40 CFR parts 122, 123 and 124. Permit includes an NPDES general permit (Chapter 529). Permit does not include any permit which has not yet been the subject of final agency action, such as a draft permit or a proposed permit.

Person means an individual, firm, corporation, municipality, quasi-municipal corporation, state agency, federal agency or other legal entity.

MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

STANDARD CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PERMITS

Point source means any discernible, confined and discrete conveyance, including, but not limited to, any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation or vessel or other floating craft, from which pollutants are or may be discharged.

Pollutant means dredged spoil, solid waste, junk, incinerator residue, sewage, refuse, effluent, garbage, sewage sludge, munitions, chemicals, biological or radiological materials, oil, petroleum products or byproducts, heat, wrecked or discarded equipment, rock, sand, dirt and industrial, municipal, domestic, commercial or agricultural wastes of any kind.

Process wastewater means any water which, during manufacturing or processing, comes into direct contact with or results from the production or use of any raw material, intermediate product, finished product, byproduct, or waste product.

Publicly owned treatment works ("POTW") means any facility for the treatment of pollutants owned by the State or any political subdivision thereof, any municipality, district, quasi-municipal corporation or other public entity.

Septage means, for the purposes of this permit, any waste, refuse, effluent sludge or other material removed from a septic tank, cesspool, vault privy or similar source which concentrates wastes or to which chemicals have been added. Septage does not include wastes from a holding tank.

Time weighted composite means a composite sample consisting of a mixture of equal volume aliquots collected over a constant time interval.

Toxic pollutant includes any pollutant listed as toxic under section 307(a)(1) or, in the case of sludge use or disposal practices, any pollutant identified in regulations implementing section 405(d) of the CWA. Toxic pollutant also includes those substances or combination of substances, including disease causing agents, which after discharge or upon exposure, ingestion, inhalation or assimilation into any organism, including humans either directly through the environment or indirectly through ingestion through food chains, will, on the basis of information available to the board either alone or in combination with other substances already in the receiving waters or the discharge, cause death, disease, abnormalities, cancer, genetic mutations, physiological malfunctions, including malfunctions in reproduction, or physical deformations in such organism or their offspring.

Wetlands means those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

Whole effluent toxicity means the aggregate toxic effect of an effluent measured directly by a toxicity test.



DEP INFORMATION SHEET

Appealing a Department Licensing Decision

Dated: August 2021

Contact: (207) 314-1458

SUMMARY

This document provides information regarding a person's rights and obligations in filing an administrative or judicial appeal of a licensing decision made by the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Commissioner.

Except as provided below, there are two methods available to an aggrieved person seeking to appeal a licensing decision made by the DEP Commissioner: (1) an administrative process before the Board of Environmental Protection (Board); or (2) a judicial process before Maine's Superior Court. An aggrieved person seeking review of a licensing decision over which the Board had original jurisdiction may seek judicial review in Maine's Superior Court.

A judicial appeal of final action by the Commissioner or the Board regarding an application for an expedited wind energy development ([35-A M.R.S. § 3451\(4\)](#)) or a general permit for an offshore wind energy demonstration project ([38 M.R.S. § 480-HH\(1\)](#)) or a general permit for a tidal energy demonstration project ([38 M.R.S. § 636-A](#)) must be taken to the Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TO THE BOARD

LEGAL REFERENCES

A person filing an appeal with the Board should review Organization and Powers, [38 M.R.S. §§ 341-D\(4\)](#) and [346](#); the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, 5 M.R.S. § [11001](#); and the DEP's [Rule Concerning the Processing of Applications and Other Administrative Matters \(Chapter 2\)](#), 06-096 C.M.R. ch. 2.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD

Not more than 30 days following the filing of a license decision by the Commissioner with the Board, an aggrieved person may appeal to the Board for review of the Commissioner's decision. The filing of an appeal with the Board, in care of the Board Clerk, is complete when the Board receives the submission by the close of business on the due date (5:00 p.m. on the 30th calendar day from which the Commissioner's decision was filed with the Board, as determined by the received time stamp on the document or electronic mail). Appeals filed after 5:00 p.m. on the 30th calendar day from which the Commissioner's decision was filed with the Board will be dismissed as untimely, absent a showing of good cause.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD

An appeal to the Board may be submitted via postal mail or electronic mail and must contain all signatures and required appeal contents. An electronic filing must contain the scanned original signature of the appellant(s). The appeal documents must be sent to the following address.

Chair, Board of Environmental Protection
c/o Board Clerk
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0017
ruth.a.burke@maine.gov

The DEP may also request the submittal of the original signed paper appeal documents when the appeal is filed electronically. The risk of material not being received in a timely manner is on the sender, regardless of the method used.

At the time an appeal is filed with the Board, the appellant must send a copy of the appeal to: (1) the Commissioner of the DEP (Maine Department of Environmental Protection, 17 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0017); (2) the licensee; and if a hearing was held on the application, (3) any intervenors in that hearing proceeding. **Please contact the DEP at 207-287-7688 with questions or for contact information regarding a specific licensing decision.**

REQUIRED APPEAL CONTENTS

A complete appeal must contain the following information at the time the appeal is submitted.

1. *Aggrieved status.* The appeal must explain how the appellant has standing to bring the appeal. This requires an explanation of how the appellant may suffer a particularized injury as a result of the Commissioner's decision.
2. *The findings, conclusions, or conditions objected to or believed to be in error.* The appeal must identify the specific findings of fact, conclusions of law, license conditions, or other aspects of the written license decision or of the license review process that the appellant objects to or believes to be in error.
3. *The basis of the objections or challenge.* For the objections identified in Item #2, the appeal must state why the appellant believes that the license decision is incorrect and should be modified or reversed. If possible, the appeal should cite specific evidence in the record or specific licensing criteria that the appellant believes were not properly considered or fully addressed.
4. *The remedy sought.* This can range from reversal of the Commissioner's decision on the license to changes in specific license conditions.
5. *All the matters to be contested.* The Board will limit its consideration to those matters specifically raised in the written notice of appeal.
6. *Request for hearing.* If the appellant wishes the Board to hold a public hearing on the appeal, a request for hearing must be filed as part of the notice of appeal, and it must include an offer of proof regarding the testimony and other evidence that would be presented at the hearing. The offer of proof must consist of a statement of the substance of the evidence, its relevance to the issues on appeal, and whether any witnesses would testify. The Board will hear the arguments in favor of and in opposition to a hearing on the appeal and the presentations on the merits of an appeal at a regularly scheduled meeting. If the Board decides to hold a public hearing on an appeal, that hearing will then be scheduled for a later date.
7. *New or additional evidence to be offered.* If an appellant wants to provide evidence not previously provided to DEP staff during the DEP's review of the application, the request and the proposed supplemental evidence must be submitted with the appeal. The Board may allow new or additional evidence to be considered in an appeal only under limited circumstances. The proposed supplemental evidence must be relevant and material, and (a) the person seeking to add information to the record must show due diligence in bringing the evidence to the DEP's attention at the earliest possible time in the licensing process; or (b) the evidence itself must be newly discovered and therefore unable to have been presented earlier in the process. Requirements for supplemental evidence are set forth in [Chapter 2 § 24](#).

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN APPEALING A DECISION TO THE BOARD

1. *Be familiar with all relevant material in the DEP record.* A license application file is public information, subject to any applicable statutory exceptions, and is made accessible by the DEP. Upon request, the DEP will make application materials available to review and photocopy during normal working hours. There may be a charge for copies or copying services.

2. *Be familiar with the regulations and laws under which the application was processed, and the procedural rules governing the appeal.* DEP staff will provide this information upon request and answer general questions regarding the appeal process.
3. *The filing of an appeal does not operate as a stay to any decision.* If a license has been granted and it has been appealed, the license normally remains in effect pending the processing of the appeal. Unless a stay of the decision is requested and granted, a licensee may proceed with a project pending the outcome of an appeal, but the licensee runs the risk of the decision being reversed or modified as a result of the appeal.

WHAT TO EXPECT ONCE YOU FILE A TIMELY APPEAL WITH THE BOARD

The Board will acknowledge receipt of an appeal, and it will provide the name of the DEP project manager assigned to the specific appeal. The notice of appeal, any materials admitted by the Board as supplementary evidence, any materials admitted in response to the appeal, relevant excerpts from the DEP's administrative record for the application, and the DEP staff's recommendation, in the form of a proposed Board Order, will be provided to Board members. The appellant, the licensee, and parties of record are notified in advance of the date set for the Board's consideration of an appeal or request for a hearing. The appellant and the licensee will have an opportunity to address the Board at the Board meeting. The Board will decide whether to hold a hearing on appeal when one is requested before deciding the merits of the appeal. The Board's decision on appeal may be to affirm all or part, affirm with conditions, order a hearing to be held as expeditiously as possible, reverse all or part of the decision of the Commissioner, or remand the matter to the Commissioner for further proceedings. The Board will notify the appellant, the licensee, and parties of record of its decision on appeal.

II. JUDICIAL APPEALS

Maine law generally allows aggrieved persons to appeal final Commissioner or Board licensing decisions to Maine's Superior Court (see [38 M.R.S. § 346\(1\)](#); 06-096 C.M.R. ch. 2; [5 M.R.S. § 11001](#); and M.R. Civ. P. 80C). A party's appeal must be filed with the Superior Court within 30 days of receipt of notice of the Board's or the Commissioner's decision. For any other person, an appeal must be filed within 40 days of the date the decision was rendered. An appeal to court of a license decision regarding an expedited wind energy development, a general permit for an offshore wind energy demonstration project, or a general permit for a tidal energy demonstration project may only be taken directly to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court. See 38 M.R.S. § 346(4).

Maine's Administrative Procedure Act, DEP statutes governing a particular matter, and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure must be consulted for the substantive and procedural details applicable to judicial appeals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions or need additional information on the appeal process, for administrative appeals contact the Board Clerk at 207-287-2811 or the Board Executive Analyst at 207-314-1458 bill.hinkel@maine.gov, or for judicial appeals contact the court clerk's office in which the appeal will be filed.

Note: This information sheet, in conjunction with a review of the statutory and regulatory provisions referred to herein, is provided to help a person to understand their rights and obligations in filing an administrative or judicial appeal. The DEP provides this information sheet for general guidance only; it is not intended for use as a legal reference. Maine law governs an appellant's rights.
