



c/o Delaware River Greenway Partnership  
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August 18, 2022

NJ Department of Environmental Protection  
Water Quality Management Planning Program  
501 East State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08625

*RE: Jaindl Development application to amend WQMP*

The Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Management Council is deeply concerned about the impacts large-scale warehouses will have on the Delaware River Basin. This project is one of many near or on the Delaware River. The impacts of human wastewater and stormwater on the river and surrounding basin are significant.

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Council, a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, focuses on the area of the Delaware River south of the Delaware Water Gap and north of Trenton.

Our Management Plan requires the evaluation of projects that may impact the water quality of the Delaware River. We have been tracking the conceptual Jaindl warehouse development proposal and learned that the White Township warehouse developer (Jaindl Land Company) has applied to amend the Upper Delaware Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). WQMP was established to protect the water quality of the Delaware River. Since the 1970s, the river's water quality has been improving, so much so that the sturgeon has returned to the area. Projects such as this one would have negative impacts on that improvement.

The proposed project consists of two high-cube warehouses, with office space, totaling approximately 2.7 million square feet. As calculated, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-23.3, the proposed project will generate a projected wastewater flow of 33,525 gallons per day (gpd) based on a total of 1,033 warehouse employees and 77,000 square feet of office space.

The proposed development area features karst topology, which is characterized by soluble rock types such as limestone and marble, where groundwater can easily become just as polluted as surface streams. Sewage may enter directly into underground channels. Contaminants move

quicker and further than in other geological areas where clay or sand typically filter contaminants. Per NJDEP BMP Manual Section 9.7:

*The presence or absence of Karst topography Is an important consideration when designing a small-scale bioretention system designed to infiltrate into the subsoil; in areas of the State with this type of geology, the bedrock is composed of highly soluble rock. If karst topography is present, infiltration of runoff may lead to subsidence and sinkholes; therefore, only bioretention systems designed with underdrains should be used in these areas.*

The massive sewage disposal field is planned for an area with a long history of sinkholes formation. The project proposes to infiltrate stormwater runoff over the highly-erodible karst leading to additional sinkholes and underground erosion. Increased potential for sinkholes can undermine the foundations of the proposed warehouses, area roads, and the small, remaining farmland. Ten infiltrative detention ponds will concentrate stormwater in small areas contrary to NJDEP guidelines. It will be directing partially treated contaminated runoff to groundwater where highly erodible carbonate rock exists. Sinkholes may undermine the ponds.

The proposed bioretention ponds are questionable efficiency for removing dissolved solids such as road salts. Sixty acres of impervious parking area will require salt treatment in the winter. Per NJDOT guidance, expect 288 tons of salt to be spread annually, some will end up in the recharge ponds, and some will escape to the Delaware River outfall from the detention ponds.

The plan will have impacts on the nearby Delaware River as well as the adjacent Buckhorn Creek that borders the southern side of the development. As a category 1 waterbody, the Buckhorn receives special protection. If wastewater goes into Buckhorn Creek, there will be a measurable difference in water quality.

The potential for excessive stormwater runoff due to the planned impervious cover, the lack of public sewer and public water infrastructures, and the sheer size of the development will negatively impact the Delaware River's water quality. Moreover, an existing vernal pond supporting frogs and salamanders will be obliterated.

Amending WQMP goes against our Management Plan which can be found at <https://lowerdelawarewildandscenic.org/index.php/resources/documents/lower-delaware-wild-and-scenic-management-plan>. Another reference, our Stewardship Handbook can be found at <https://lowerdelawarewildandscenic.org/index.php/resources/documents/guides/stewardship-handbook/>.

Specifically, see page 24 of the Management Plan:

*Water Quality: Maintain existing water quality in the Delaware River and its tributaries from measurably degrading and improve it where practical. Policies: (1) Achieve the highest practical state and federal water quality designation for the river and its tributaries. (2) Manage point discharge and stormwater non-point runoff to minimize degradation of the river. (3) Encourage the use of Best Management Practices in the agricultural areas within the river corridor to minimize water quality degradation from stormwater runoff. (4) Encourage the use*

*of Best Management Practices for activities other than agriculture that could result in water quality degradation from stormwater runoff. (5) Discourage inappropriate development in the floodplain, wetlands, steep slopes, and buffer strips along the Lower Delaware River and its tributaries.*

In addition, pages 10-15 of our Stewardship Handbook also include commentary about stormwater management and water quality.

We support the due diligence of the NJDEP and the Highlands Council on the wastewater treatment issue and hope that they perform the same level of diligence regarding stormwater management.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Richard Dodds*

Chairman