

**Oregon Water Resources Department**  
**Water Right Services Division**

**PROPOSED FINAL ORDER**

In the Matter of the Application for an Extension of Time for Permit G-16004, Water Right Application G-16465, in the name of Simnitt Nursery

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Permit Information

Application File:	G-16465
Permit:	G-16004
Basin:	2 – Willamette / Watermaster District 20
Date of Priority:	May 23, 2005
Source of Water:	Four wells in the Willamette River Basin
Purpose of Use:	Irrigation of 17.88 Acres
Maximum Rate:	0.45 cubic feet per second

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***\*\*Please read this Proposed Final Order in its entirety as it may contain additional conditions not included in the original permit. \*\****

*In Summary, the Department proposes to:*

- Grant an extension of time to apply water to full beneficial use from October 1, 2010 to October 1, 2018<sup>1</sup>.
- Make the extension subject to certain conditions set forth below.

This Extension of Time request is being processed in accordance with Oregon Revised Statute 537.630 and 539.010(5), and Oregon Administrative Rule Chapter 690, Division 315.

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<sup>1</sup>Pursuant to ORS 537.630(4), upon the completion of beneficial use of water allowed under the permit, the permittee shall hire a certified water rights examiner to survey the appropriation. Within one year after the complete application of water to a beneficial use (or by the date allowed for the complete application of water to a beneficial use), the permittee shall submit a map of the survey and a new or revised claim of beneficial use as deemed appropriate by the Department.

## **ACRONYM QUICK REFERENCE**

Department – Oregon Department of Water Resources

PFO – Proposed Final Order

cfs – cubic feet per second

gpm – gallons per minute

## **AUTHORITY**

Generally, see ORS 537.630 and OAR Chapter 690 Division 315.

**ORS 537.630(1)** provides in pertinent part that the Oregon Water Resources Department may, for good cause shown, order an extension of time within which: irrigation or other works shall be completed; the well or other means of developing and securing ground water shall be completed; or the right perfected. In determining the extension, the Department shall give due weight to the considerations described under ORS 539.010(5) and to whether other governmental requirements relating to the project have significantly delayed completion of construction or perfection of the right.

**ORS 539.010(5)** provides in pertinent part that the Water Resources Director, for good cause shown, may extend the time within which the full amount of the water appropriated shall be applied to a beneficial use. This statute instructs the Director to consider: the cost of the appropriation and application of the water to a beneficial purpose; the good faith of the appropriator; the market for water or power to be supplied; the present demands therefore; and the income or use that may be required to provide fair and reasonable returns upon the investment.

**OAR 690-315-0040** provides in pertinent part that the Water Resources Department shall make findings to determine if an extension of time may be approved to complete construction and/or apply water to full beneficial use.

**OAR 690-315-0050(6)** requires the Department, for extensions exceeding five years, to establish checkpoints to determine if diligence is being exercised in the development and perfection of the water use permit. Intervals between checkpoints will not exceed five year periods.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### *Background*

1. Permit G-16004 was granted by the Department on January 12, 2006. The permit authorizes the use of up to 0.45 cfs of water from four wells in the Willamette River Basin for nursery use on 17.88 acres. The permit specified construction of the water system was to be completed and complete application of water was to be made on or

before October 1, 2010.

2. The permit holder Simnitt Nursery submitted an "Application for Extension of Time" to the Department on September 13, 2013, requesting only the time to apply water to full beneficial use under the terms and conditions of Permit G-16004 be extended from October 1, 2010 to October 1, 2018. The extension application form identifies the installation of meters (a water system construction activity) on all four wells as remaining work to be accomplished. The Department, therefore, determined that the permit holder's intent was to also request the time in which to complete construction of the water system be extended from October 1, 2010, to October 1, 2018. This is the first permit extension requested for Permit G-16004.
3. Notification of the Application for Extension of Time for Permit G-16004 was published in the Department's Public Notice dated September 24, 2013. No public comments were received regarding the extension application.

**Review Criteria [OAR 690-315-0040]**

*The time limits to complete construction and/or apply water to full beneficial use may be extended if the Department finds that the permit holder has met the requirements set forth under OAR 690-315-0040. This determination shall consider the applicable requirements of ORS 537.230<sup>2</sup>, 537.248<sup>3</sup>, 537.630<sup>4</sup> and/or 539.010(5)<sup>5</sup>.*

**Complete Extension of Time Application [OAR 690-315-0040(1)(a)]**

4. On September 13, 2013, the Department received a completed Application for Extension of Time and the fee specified in ORS 536.050 from the permit holder.

**Start of Construction [OAR 690-315-0040(1)(b) and 690-315-0040(5)]**

5. Senate Bill 300 (1999 legislation) eliminated the requirement that holders of new surface water and ground water permits start construction on water projects within one year after the Department issues the permit. Senate Bill 300 applies to any application for a permit filed after October 23, 1999, including this application.

**Duration of Extension [OAR 690-315-0040(1)(c)]**

*Under OAR 690-315-0040(1)(c), in order to approve an extension of time for water use permits the Department must find that the time requested is reasonable and the applicant can complete the project within the time requested.*

6. As of September 13, 2013, the remaining work to be completed consists of installing meters on all four wells, and reporting the recorded monthly water use to the Department annually.

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<sup>2</sup>ORS 537.230 applies to surface water permits only.

<sup>3</sup>ORS 537.248 applies to reservoir permits only.

<sup>4</sup>ORS 537.630 applies to ground water permits only.

<sup>5</sup>ORS 539.010(5) applies to surface water and ground water permits.

7. Given the amount of development left to occur, the Department has determined that the permit holder's request to have until October 1, 2018, to complete construction of the water system and to accomplish the application of water to beneficial use under the terms and conditions of Permit G-16004 is both reasonable and necessary.

**Good Cause [OAR 690-315-0040(1)(d)]**

*The Department's determination of good cause shall consider the requirements set forth under OAR 690-315-0040(2).*

**Reasonable Diligence of the Appropriator [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(a)]**

*The Department's determination of reasonable diligence shall consider the requirements set forth under OAR 690-315-0040(3)(a-d). In accordance with OAR 690-315-0040(3), the Department shall consider, but is not limited to, the following factors when determining whether the applicant has demonstrated reasonable diligence in previous performance under the permit:*

**Amount of Construction [OAR 690-315-0040(3)(a)]**

8. Work was accomplished within the time allowed in the permit or previous extension as follows:
  - a. Construction of the four wells was completed prior to October 1, 2010. Well 1 (CLAC 9697) was drilled and the pump installed in 1989. Well 2 (CLAC 9730) was drilled and the pump installed in 1967. Well 3 (CLAC 9721) was drilled and the pump installed in 1986. Well 4 (CLAC 9700) was drilled and the pump installed in 1972). Aluminum laterals and overhead sprinklers were purchased and installed in 2005.
  - b. Work was completed during the original development time frame under Permit G-16004 consisting of putting water to year-round nursery use on all 17.88 acres.
  - c. Since October 1, 2010, the permit holder has applied water to use on all 17.88 acres.

**Beneficial Use of Water [OAR 690-315-0040(3)(b)]**

9. The following beneficial use of water was made during the permit or previous extension time limits:
  - a. Since the issuance of Permit G-16004 on January 12, 2006, a maximum rate of 0.45 cfs of water has been appropriated from the four wells for year-round nursery use on all 17.88 acres of land.

**Compliance with Conditions [OAR 690-315-0040(3)(c)]**

10. The Department has considered the permit holder's compliance with conditions, and has identified the following concerns: (1) the extension application indicates that meters were not installed on each well prior to water use beginning as required by the permit,

(2) annual reports of the amount of water used each month have not been received by the Department as indicated on the extension application.

Failure to comply with permit conditions constitutes illegal use of water. Beneficial use of water under this permit, therefore, has not yet been demonstrated. In order to legally perfect the use of water under this permit, the permit holder must demonstrate that all conditions of the permit have been satisfied.

The Department understands the permit holder's primary intent of the request for an extension of time is to satisfy the outstanding permit conditions identified above.

*Financial Investments to Appropriate and Apply Water to a Beneficial Purpose [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(b),(3)(d),(4)(d)]*

11. As of September 13, 2013, the permit holder has invested approximately \$36,400 which is approximately 90 percent of the total projected cost for complete development of this project. The permit holder anticipates an additional \$4,000 investment is needed for the completion of this project.

*Good Faith of the Appropriator [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(c)]*

12. The Department has found good faith of the appropriator under Permit G-16004.

*The Market and Present Demands for Water [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(d-e)]*

*The Department's determinations of market and present demand for water or power to be supplied shall consider the requirements set forth under OAR 690-315-0040(4)(a-f). In accordance with OAR 690-315-0040(4), the Department shall consider, but is not limited to, the following factors when determining the market and the present demand for water or power to be supplied:*

13. The amount of water available to satisfy other affected water rights and scenic waterway flows; special water use designations established since permit issuance, including but not limited to state scenic waterways, federal wild and scenic rivers, serious water management problem areas or water quality limited sources established under 33 U.S.C. 1313(d); or the habitat needs of sensitive, threatened or endangered species, in consultation with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife [OAR 690-315-0040(4)(a-c)].

The amount of water available to satisfy other affected water rights and scenic waterway flows was determined at the time of issuance of Permit G-16004; furthermore, water availability for other affected water rights and scenic waterway flows after the permit was issued is determined when an application for a new water right is submitted. The points of appropriation for Permit G-16004, located within the Willamette River Basin, are not located within a limited or critical ground water area. The Willamette River is not located within or above any state or federal scenic waterway, however, it is located within an area ranked "moderate" for stream flow

restoration needs as determined by the Department in consultation with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and is located within a Sensitive, Threatened or Endangered Fish Species Area as identified by the Department in consultation with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The points of appropriation are not in an area listed by the Department of Environmental Quality as a water quality limited stream.

*Other economic interests dependent on completion of the project [OAR 690-315-0040(4)(e)].*

14. None have been identified.

*Other factors relevant to the determination of the market and present demand for water and power [OAR 690-315-0040(4)(f)].*

15. OAR 690-315-0050(6) requires the Department to place a checkpoint condition on this extension of time in order to ensure diligence is exercised in the development and perfection of the water use permit. A "Checkpoint Condition" is specified under Item 1 of the "Conditions" section of this PFO to meet this condition.

*Fair Return Upon Investment [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(f)]*

16. Use and income from the permitted water development will likely result in reasonable returns upon the investment made to date.

*Other Governmental Requirements [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(g)]*

17. Delay in the development of this project was not caused by any other governmental requirements.

*Unforeseen Events [OAR 690-315-0040(2)(h)]*

18. None have been identified.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. The applicant is entitled to apply for an extension of time to complete construction and/or completely apply water to the full beneficial use pursuant to ORS 537.630(1).
2. The applicant has submitted a complete extension application form and the fee specified in ORS 536.050, as required by OAR 690-315-0040(1)(a).
3. The applicant complied with begin actual construction timeline requirements pursuant to ORS 537.630 as required by OAR 690-315-0040(1)(b) and OAR 690-315-0040(5).
4. Completion of construction and full application of water to beneficial use can be accomplished by October 1, 2018, as required by OAR 690-315-0040(1)(c).
5. The Department has considered the reasonable diligence and good faith of the appropriator, the cost to appropriate and apply water to a beneficial purpose, the

market and present demands for water to be supplied, the financial investment made and fair and reasonable return upon the investment, the requirements of other governmental agencies, and unforeseen events over which the permit holder had no control, whether denial of the extension will result in undue hardship to the applicant and whether there are no other reasonable alternatives for meeting water use needs, any other factors relevant to a determination of good cause, and has determined that the applicant has shown that good cause exists for an extension of time to apply water to full beneficial use pursuant to OAR 690-315-0040(1)(d).

6. As required by OAR 690-315-0050(6) and as described in Finding 15 above, the Department has established progress checkpoints, as specified in the "Conditions" section of this PFO (Item 1), in order to ensure future diligence is exercised in the development and perfection of Permit G-16004.

## PROPOSED ORDER

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Department proposes to issue an order to:

Extend the time for complete construction of the water system under Permit G-16004 from October 1, 2010 to October 1, 2018.

Extend the time to apply water to beneficial use under Permit G-16004 from October 1, 2010 to October 1, 2018.

Subject to the following conditions:

### CONDITIONS

1. Checkpoint Condition

The permit holder must submit a completed Progress Report Form to the Department by **October 1, 2017**. ***A form will be enclosed with your Final Order.***

- (a) At each checkpoint, the permit holder shall submit and the Department shall review evidence of the permit holder's diligence towards completion of the project and compliance with terms and conditions of the permit and extension. If, after this review, the Department determines the permit holder has not been diligent in developing and perfecting the water use permit, or complied with all terms and conditions, the Department shall modify or further condition the permit or extension to ensure future compliance, or begin cancellation proceedings on the undeveloped portion of the permit pursuant to ORS 537.260 or 537.410, or require submission of a final proof survey pursuant to ORS 537.250;

- (b) The Department shall provide notice of receipt of progress reports in its weekly notice and shall allow a 30 day comment period for each report. The Department shall provide notice of its determination to anyone who submitted comments.

DATED: August 12, 2014

  
Dwight W. French, Administrator,  
Water Right Services Division

*If you have any questions,  
please check the information  
box on the last page for the  
appropriate names and  
phone numbers.*

Proposed Final Order Hearing Rights

1. Under the provisions of OAR 690-315-0100(1) and 690-315-0060, the applicant or any other person adversely affected or aggrieved by the proposed final order may submit a written protest to the proposed final order. The written protest must be received by the Water Resources Department no later than **September 26, 2014**, being 45 days from the date of publication of the proposed final order in the Department's weekly notice.
2. A written protest shall include:
  - a. The name, address and telephone number of the petitioner;
  - b. A description of the petitioner's interest in the proposed final order and if the protestant claims to represent the public interest, a precise statement of the public interest represented;
  - c. A detailed description of how the action proposed in the proposed final order would adversely affect or aggrieve the petitioner's interest;
  - d. A detailed description of how the proposed final order is in error or deficient and how to correct the alleged error or deficiency;
  - e. Any citation of legal authority supporting the petitioner, if known;
  - f. Proof of service of the protest upon the water right permit holder, if petitioner is other than the water right permit holder; and
  - g. The applicant or non-applicant protest fee required under ORS 536.050.



