

Oregon Water Resources Department

Water Right Services Division

Water Right Application G-19073 in the)
name of MCKEE FAMILY FARMS LLC) PROPOSED FINAL ORDER
)

Summary: The Department proposes to issue an order approving Application G-19073 and a permit consistent with the attached draft permit.

Authority

The application is being processed in accordance with Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 537.615 through 537.628, and 390.826, and Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) Chapter 690, Divisions 5, 8, 9, 33, 300, 310, 400, 410, and the Willamette Basin Program (OAR 690-502). These statutes and rules can be viewed on the following website: <https://www.oregon.gov/OWRD/programs/policylawandrules/Pages/default.aspx>.

The Department's main website can be found at: <https://www.oregon.gov/OWRD>.

The Department shall presume that a proposed groundwater use will ensure the preservation of the public welfare, safety and health as described in ORS 537.525 if:

- a) The proposed use is allowed in the applicable basin program established pursuant to ORS 536.300 and 536.340 or given a preference under ORS 536.310(12);
- b) Water is available;
- c) The proposed use will not injure other water rights; and
- d) The proposed use complies with the rules of the Commission. ORS 537.621(2); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(b)

All four criteria must be met for a proposed use to be presumed to ensure the preservation of the public welfare, safety and health. When the criteria are met and the presumption is established the Department must further evaluate the proposed use, any comments received, information available in its files or received from other interested agencies, and any other available information to determine whether the presumption is overcome. OAR 690-310-0140

If the Department determines that the presumption is established and not overcome, the Department shall issue a Proposed Final Order recommending issuance of the permit subject to any appropriate modifications or conditions.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Application History

1. On March 11, 2021, McKee Family Farms LLC filed a complete application for the following water use:

Source: A WELL (POLK 54000) IN WILLAMETTE RIVER BASIN
Use: IRRIGATION OF 164.6 ACRES
Rate: 0.11 CUBIC FOOT PER SECOND (CFS)
Period of Use: MARCH 1 THROUGH OCTOBER 31
County: POLK COUNTY
Place of Use: SECTIONS 4, 5, 8, AND 9, TOWNSHIP 9 SOUTH, RANGE 4 WEST, W.M.

2. On May 7, 2021, the Department mailed the applicant notice of its Initial Review, determining that the appropriation of 0.11 CFS of water from a well (POLK 54000) in Willamette River Basin for irrigation of 164.6 acres is allowable March 1 through October 31 of each year. The applicant did not notify the Department to stop processing the application within 14 days of that date.
3. On May 11, 2021, the Department noticed the application in its weekly public notice, requesting comments, and providing information for interested persons about obtaining future notices and a copy of the Proposed Final Order.

Presumption Criteria (a) - Consistency with Basin Program

4. Irrigation is allowed under the Willamette Basin Program (OAR 690-502-0160(2)). ORS 537.621(3)(b); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(b)

Presumption Criteria (b) - Water Availability

5. An assessment of groundwater availability has been completed by the Department. A copy of this assessment is in the file and can be viewed on the Department's website. Groundwater will likely be available within the capacity of the resource, and if properly conditioned (and if authorized), the proposed use of groundwater will avoid injury to existing groundwater rights. ORS 537.621(3)(c); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(c)

Presumption Criteria (c) - Injury Determination

6. The proposed use, if authorized, will not injure other water rights. ORS 537.621(3)(d); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(e)

Presumption Criteria (d) - Whether the use complies with rules of the Commission

7. Documentation has been submitted from the relevant land-use planning jurisdiction that indicates the proposed use is allowed outright. ORS 537.621(3)(b); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(b)
8. The Department has determined that the proposed groundwater use will not have the potential for substantial interference with surface water. ORS 537.621(3)(b); OAR 690-009-0040(4)
9. The proposed groundwater use is not located within a designated critical groundwater area. ORS 537.620(4)(a), 537.621(3)(a); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(a)

Determination of Presumption that a proposed groundwater use will ensure the preservation of the public welfare, safety and health

Based on the review of the presumption criteria (a)-(d) above, the presumption has been established. ORS 537.621(2); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(g)

Further evaluation of the proposed use

10. No comments were received by the close of the comment period. OAR 690-310-0140(3)(a)
11. Information available in Department files, received from other interested agencies, and other available information does not provide a preponderance of evidence that the proposed use would not ensure the preservation of the public welfare, safety and health under ORS 537.525. OAR 690-310-0140(3)

Other Criteria and Requirements

12. The proposed use is not located within or above a state scenic waterway, as designated under ORS 390.826. 537.621(3)(a); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(a)
13. The amount requested, 0.11 CFS, is necessary for the proposed use. ORS 537.621(3)(c); OAR 690-310-0150(2)(d)
14. The applicant proposed methods to measure the amount of water appropriated, prevent damage to aquatic life and riparian habitat, prevent discharge of contaminated water to a surface stream, or to prevent damage to public uses of any affected surface waters. These measures are adequate at this time. OAR 690-310-0150(2)(j)
15. The proposed use complies with rules of the Water Resources Commission not otherwise described above.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The proposed use, as conditioned, would ensure the preservation of the public welfare, safety and health as described in ORS 537.525.

NOTE: When issuing permits, ORS 537.628(1) authorizes the Department to include limitations and conditions which have been determined necessary to protect the public welfare, safety and health.

PROPOSED ORDER

The Department recommends approval of Application G-19073 and issuance of a permit consistent with the attached draft permit.

DATED September 21, 2021

Alyssa Mucken
Water Rights Section Manager, for
Thomas M. Byler, Director
Oregon Water Resources Department

Protests

Under the provisions of ORS 537.153(7) (for surface water) or ORS 537.621(8) (for groundwater), you can protest this Proposed Final Order. Protests must be received by the Water Resources Department no later than **November 5, 2021**.

IMPORTANT: Due to COVID-19, the Department's office is closed to walk-in services. The Department encourages the submission of protests by U.S. mail. Please consider mailing early to ensure the Department receives the protest by the deadline specified above.

Protests must be in writing and include the following:

- Your name, address, and telephone number;
- A description of your interest in the Proposed Final Order, and, if you claim to represent the public interest, a precise statement of the public interest represented;
- A detailed description of how the action proposed in the Proposed Final Order would impair or be detrimental to your interest;
- A detailed description of how the Proposed Final Order is in error or deficient, and how to correct the alleged error or deficiency;
- Any citation of legal authority to support your protest, if known;
- To affect the Department's determination that the proposed use in this application will, or will not, ensure the preservation of the public welfare, safety and health as described in ORS 537.525, ORS 537.621(2)(b) requires that a protest demonstrate, by a preponderance of evidence any of the following: (a) One or more of the criteria for establishing the presumption are, or are not, satisfied; or (b) The specific aspect of the public welfare, safety and health under ORS 537.525 that would be impaired or detrimentally affected, and specifically how the identified aspect of the public welfare, safety and health under ORS 537.525 would be impaired or be adversely affected;
- If you are the applicant, a protest fee of \$410 required by ORS 536.050; and
- If you are not the applicant, a protest fee of \$810 required by ORS 536.050 and proof of service of the protest upon the applicant.
- If you are the applicant, a statement of whether or not you are requesting a contested case hearing.

Requests for Standing

Under the provisions of ORS 537.153(7) (for surface water) or ORS 537.621(8) (for groundwater), persons other than the applicant who support a Proposed Final Order can request standing for purposes of participating in any contested case proceeding on the Proposed Final Order or for judicial review of a Final Order.

Requests for standing must be received in the Water Resources Department no later than **November 5, 2021**. Requests for standing must be in writing, and must include the following:

- The requester's name, mailing address and telephone number;
- If the requester is representing a group, association or other organization, the name, address and telephone number of the represented group;

DRAFT

This is not a permit.

DRAFT

STATE OF OREGON

COUNTY OF POLK

DRAFT PERMIT TO APPROPRIATE THE PUBLIC WATERS

THIS DRAFT PERMIT IS HEREBY ISSUED TO

MCKEE FAMILY FARMS LLC
11640 ELKINS RD
MONMOUTH OR 97361

The specific limits and conditions of the use are listed below.

APPLICATION FILE NUMBER: G-19073

SOURCE OF WATER: A WELL (POLK 54000) IN WILLAMETTE RIVER BASIN

PURPOSE OR USE: IRRIGATION OF 164.6 ACRES

MAXIMUM RATE: 0.11 CUBIC FOOT PER SECOND

PERIOD OF USE: MARCH 1 THROUGH OCTOBER 31

DATE OF PRIORITY: MARCH 11, 2021

AUTHORIZED POINT OF APPROPRIATION:

Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q	Measured Distances
9 S	4 W	WM	4	SE SW	1100 FEET NORTH AND 1400 FEET EAST FROM SW CORNER, SECTION 4

The amount of water used for irrigation under this right, together with the amount secured under any other right existing for the same lands, is limited to a diversion of ONE-EIGHTIETH of one cubic foot per second and 2.5 acre-feet for each acre irrigated during the irrigation season of each year.

AUTHORIZED PLACE OF USE:

Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q	Acres
9 S	4 W	WM	4	SW SW	36.00
9 S	4 W	WM	4	SE SW	5.00
9 S	4 W	WM	5	NE SE	8.00
9 S	4 W	WM	5	NW SE	19.00
9 S	4 W	WM	5	SW SE	17.50
9 S	4 W	WM	5	SE SE	35.00
9 S	4 W	WM	8	NE NE	36.50
9 S	4 W	WM	9	NW NW	7.60

PERMIT SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

1. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this permit may result in action including, but not limited to, restrictions on the use, civil penalties, or cancellation of the permit.
2. **Water Use Measurement, Recording, and Reporting:**
 - A. Before water use may begin under this permit, the permittee shall install a totalizing flow meter at each point of appropriation. The permittee shall maintain the device in good working order.
 - B. The permittee shall allow the watermaster access to the device; provided however, where any device is located within a private structure, the watermaster shall request access upon reasonable notice.
 - C. The Director may require the permittee to keep and maintain a record of the volume of water diverted, and may require the permittee to report water use on a periodic schedule as established by the Director. In addition, the Director may require the permittee to report general water-use information, the periods of water use and the place and nature of use of water under the permit.
 - D. The Director may provide an opportunity for the permittee to submit alternative measuring and reporting procedures for review and approval.

3. **Static Water Level Measurement:**

To monitor the effect of water use from the well(s) authorized under this permit, the Department requires the water user to obtain, from a qualified individual (see below), and report annual static water level measurements. The static water level shall be measured in the month of March. Reports shall be submitted to the Department within 30 days of measurement.

Measurements must be made according to the following schedule:

Before Use of Water Takes Place

Initial and Annual Measurements

The Department requires the permittee to report an initial water level measurement in the month specified above once well construction is complete and annually thereafter until use of water begins; and

After Use of Water has Begun

Seven Consecutive Annual Measurements

Following the first year of water use, the user shall report seven consecutive annual static water level measurements. The first of these seven annual measurements will establish the reference level against which future annual measurements will be compared. Based on an analysis of the data collected, the Director may require the user to obtain and report additional annual static

water level measurements beyond the seven year minimum reporting period. The additional measurements may be required in a different month. If the measurement requirement is stopped, the Director may restart it at any time.

All measurements shall be made by a certified water rights examiner, registered professional geologist, registered professional engineer, licensed well constructor or pump installer licensed by the Construction Contractors Board and be submitted to the Department on forms provided by the Department. The Department requires the individual performing the measurement to:

- A. Identify each well with its associated measurement; and
- B. Measure and report water levels to the nearest tenth of a foot as depth-to-water below ground surface; and
- C. Specify the method used to obtain each well measurement; and
- D. Certify the accuracy of all measurements and calculations reported to the Department.

The water user shall discontinue use of, or reduce the rate or volume of withdrawal from, the well(s) if any of the following events occur:

- A. Annual water level measurements reveal an average water level decline of three or more feet per year for five consecutive years; or
- B. Annual water level measurements reveal a water level decline of 15 or more feet in fewer than five consecutive years; or
- C. Annual water level measurements reveal a water level decline of 25 or more feet; or
- D. Hydraulic interference leads to a decline of 25 or more feet in any neighboring well with senior priority.

The period of non-use or restricted use shall continue until the water level rises above the decline level which triggered the action or until the Department determines, based on the permittee's and/or the Department's data and analysis, that no action is necessary because the aquifer in question can sustain the observed declines without adversely impacting the resource or senior water rights. The water user shall in no instance allow excessive decline, as defined in Commission rules, to occur within the aquifer as a result of use under this permit. If more than one well is involved, the water user may submit an alternative measurement and reporting plan for review and approval by the Department.

4. Groundwater production shall be only from the alluvial groundwater reservoir.

5. Well Identification Tag:

Prior to using water from any well listed on this permit, the permittee shall ensure that the well has been assigned an OWRD Well Identification Number (Well ID tag), which shall be permanently attached to the well. The Well ID shall be used as a reference in any correspondence regarding the well, including any reports of water use, water level, or pump test data.

STANDARD CONDITIONS

1. If the number, location, source, or construction of any well deviates from that proposed in the permit application or required by permit conditions, this permit may be subject to cancellation, unless the Department authorizes the change in writing.
2. If substantial interference with surface water or a senior water right occurs due to withdrawal of water from any well listed on this permit, then use of water from the well(s) shall be discontinued or reduced and/or the schedule of withdrawal shall be regulated until or unless the Department approves or implements an alternative administrative action to mitigate the interference. The Department encourages junior and senior appropriators to jointly develop plans to mitigate interferences.
3. The well(s) shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with the General Standards for the Construction and Maintenance of Water Supply Wells in Oregon. The works shall be equipped with a usable access port adequate to determine water-level elevation in the well at all times.
4. Where two or more water users agree among themselves as to the manner of rotation in the use of water and such agreement is placed in writing and filed by such water users with the watermaster, and such rotation system does not infringe upon such prior rights of any water user not a party to such rotation plan, the watermaster shall distribute the water according to such agreement.
5. This permit is for the beneficial use of water without waste. The water user is advised that new regulations may require the use of best practical technologies or conservation practices to achieve this end.
6. By law, the land use associated with this water use must be in compliance with statewide land-use goals and any local acknowledged land-use plan.

DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLETION TIMELINE REQUIREMENTS

1. Prior to receiving a certificate of water right, the permit holder shall submit to the Water Resources Department the results of a pump test meeting the Department's standards for each point of appropriation (well), unless an exemption has been obtained in writing under OAR 690-217. The Director may require water-level or pump-test data every ten years thereafter.
2. Construction of the well shall begin within five years of the date of permit issuance. The deadline to begin construction may not be extended. This permit is subject to cancellation proceedings if the construction deadline to begin is missed.

3. Complete application of the water shall be made within five years of the date of permit issuance. If beneficial use of permitted water has not been made before this date, the permittee may submit an application for extension of time, which may be approved based upon the merit of the application.
4. Within one year after complete application of water to the proposed use, the permittee shall submit a claim of beneficial use, which includes a map and report, prepared by a Certified Water Rights Examiner.

Issued _____

DRAFT - THIS IS NOT A PERMIT

Dwight French
Water Right Services Division Administrator, for
Thomas M. Byler, Director
Oregon Water Resources Department

Mailing List for PFO/Draft Permit Copies

Application G-19073

PFO Date September 21, 2021

Original mailed via CERTIFIED MAIL to applicant:

MCKEE FAMILY FARMS LLC
11640 ELKINS RD
MONMOUTH OR 97361

Copies Mailed

By: _____

(SUPPORT STAFF)

on: _____

Sent via auto email:

1. WRD – Watermaster District #22, Joel M. Plahn
2. WRD - Mike McCord NWR
3. WRD – SW Section

Copies sent to:

1. WRD - File # G-19073

Application Specialist: Kim French