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State NPDES Authority Statutes:

Tennessee



This material is based upon work supported by the National Agricultural Library, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

A National Agricultural Law Center Research Publication

State NPDES Authority Statutes: Tennessee

[T.C.A. § 69-3-102](#)

[T.C.A. § 69-3-105](#)

[T.C.A. § 69-3-108](#)

Current through the 2022 legislative session.

§ 69-3-102. Purpose; Public Policy.

(a) Recognizing that the waters of Tennessee are the property of the state and are held in public trust for the use of the people of the state, it is declared to be the public policy of Tennessee that the people of Tennessee, as beneficiaries of this trust, have a right to unpolluted waters. In the exercise of its public trust over the waters of the state, the government of Tennessee has an obligation to take all prudent steps to secure, protect, and preserve this right.

(b) It is further declared that the purpose of this part is to abate existing pollution of the waters of Tennessee, to reclaim polluted waters, to prevent the future pollution of the waters, and to plan for the future use of the waters so that the water resources of Tennessee might be used and enjoyed to the fullest extent consistent with the maintenance of unpolluted waters.

(c) Moreover, an additional purpose of this part is to enable the state to qualify for full participation in the national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) established under § 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, Public Law 92-500 (33 U.S.C. § 1342).

(d) Additionally, it is intended that all procedures in this part shall be in conformity with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5.

§ 69-3-105. Powers and Duties.

(a)

(1) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to establish and adopt standards of quality for all waters of the state.

(2) The general assembly recognizes that, due to various factors, no single standard of quality and purity is applicable to all waters of the state or to different segments of the same waters. It also recognizes the suitability of certain geologic formations for the placement of fluids and other substances through underground injection; provided, that adequate protection can be afforded the geologic



formations. The board shall classify all waters of the state and adopt water quality standards pursuant to such classifications. Such classifications shall be made in accordance with the declaration of policy and purpose in § 69-3-102. In preparing the classification of waters and the standards of quality mentioned above, the board shall give consideration to:

(A) The size, depth, surface area covered, volume, direction and rate of flow, stream gradient, and temperature of the water;

(B) The character of the land bordering, overlying or underlying the waters of the state and its particular suitability for particular uses, with a view to conserving the value of that land, encouraging the most appropriate use of the same for economic, residential, agricultural, industrial, recreational and conservation purposes;

(C) The past, present, and potential uses of the waters for transportation, domestic and industrial consumption, recreation, fishing and fish culture, fire prevention, the disposal of sewage, industrial and other wastes, and other possible uses.

(3) The state water quality plan provided for in subsection (e) shall contain standards of quality and purity for each of the various classes of water in accordance with the best interests of the public. In preparing such standards, the board shall give due consideration to all physical, chemical, biological, bacteriological, or radiological properties that may be necessary for preserving the quality and purity of the waters of the state.

(4) The board may amend and revise such standards and classifications, including revisions to improve and upgrade the quality of water.

(b) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to adopt, modify, repeal, promulgate after due notice and enforce rules and regulations that the board deems necessary for the proper administration of this part, the prevention, control, and abatement of pollution, or the modification of classifications and the upgrading of the standards of quality in accordance with subsection (a).

(c) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to adopt, modify, repeal, and promulgate, after due notice, all necessary rules and regulations for the purpose of controlling the discharge of sewage, other wastes, and other substances from any boats.

(d) Prior to classifying or reclassifying waters of the state, or adopting, amending, or revising standards of quality for waters of the state, or promulgating, adopting, modifying, or repealing rules and regulations, or adopting, amending, or revising water quality plans, or area-wide waste treatment plans, the board shall conduct, or cause to be conducted, public hearings in connection therewith. Notice of any public hearing shall be given not less than thirty (30) days before the date of such hearing and shall state the



date, time, and place of hearing, and the subject of the hearing. Any such notice shall be published at least once in one (1) newspaper of general public circulation circulated within the area of the state in which the water affected is located. Any person within the area of the state in which the water affected is located may contact the board and request to be placed on a notification registry, which includes such person's full name, mailing address, and telephone number. The board shall notify in writing all persons on such notification registry as to the date, time, and place of hearing, and the subject of the hearing, ten (10) days before the hearing. Any person who desires to be heard relative to water quality matters at any such public hearing shall give notice thereof in writing to the board on or before the first date set for the hearing. The board is authorized to set reasonable time limits for the oral presentation of views by any person at any such public hearing.

(e)

(1) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to proceed without delay to formulate and adopt a state water quality plan, which shall consist of the following:

(A) Water quality standards as outlined in subsection (a);

(B) Water quality objectives for planning and operation of water resource development projects, for water quality control activities, and for the improvement of existing water quality;

(C) Other principles and guidelines deemed essential by the board of water quality, oil and gas; and

(D) A program of implementation for those waters that do not presently meet established water quality standards.

(2) The state water quality plan shall be reviewed at least biennially and may be revised. During the process of formulating or revising the state water quality plan, the board shall consult with and carefully evaluate the recommendations of concerned federal, state, and local agencies.

(f) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to:

(1) Hear appeals as specified in subsection (i) from administrative judges' orders assessing penalties or damages, or issuing, denying, revoking or modifying a permit; and

(2) Affirm, modify, or revoke such orders, as specified in subsection (i).

(g) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to require the technical secretary to carry out surveys, research, and investigations into all aspects of water use and water quality.



(h)

(1) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to adopt, modify, repeal, and promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the purpose of establishing and administering a comprehensive permit program that will enable the department of environment and conservation to be designated by the United States environmental protection agency as authorized to issue permits under the national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) established by § 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, P.L. 92-500 (33 U.S.C. § 1342).

(2) Such rules and regulations shall include provisions for:

(A) Forms and procedures for permit applications;

(B) Public notice and opportunity for public hearing on permit applications;

(C) Promulgation and application in permits of effluent standards and limitations, water quality standards, schedules of compliance, and such other terms and conditions as are necessary to implement this part;

(D) Monitoring and inspecting effluent discharges or treatment facilities and recording and reporting the results;

(E) Enforcement of this part, rules and regulations promulgated under it, and the terms and conditions of permits; and

(F) Adoption and enforcement of permits that have been issued by the United States environmental protection agency pursuant to § 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, P.L. 92-500.

(i) A petition for permit appeal may be filed by the permit applicant or by any aggrieved person who participated in the public comment period or gave testimony at a formal public hearing whose appeal is based upon any of the issues that were provided to the commissioner in writing during the public comment period or in testimony at a formal public hearing on the permit application. Additionally, for those permits for which the department gives public notice of a draft permit, any permit applicant or aggrieved person may base a permit appeal on any material change to conditions in the final permit from those in the draft, unless the material change has been subject to additional opportunity for public comment. Any petition for permit appeal under this subsection (i) shall be filed with the board within thirty (30) days after public notice of the commissioner's decision to issue or deny the permit. Notwithstanding § 4-5-223 or § 69-3-118(a), or any other law to the contrary, this subsection (i) and the established procedures of Tennessee's antidegradation statement, found in the rules promulgated by the department, shall be the exclusive means for obtaining administrative review of the commissioner's issuance or denial of a permit. When such a petition is timely filed,



the procedure for conducting the contested case shall be in accordance with § 69-3-110(a).

(j) The board has and shall exercise the power, duty, and responsibility to adopt, modify, repeal, and promulgate all necessary rules and regulations that the board deems necessary relating to the underground placement of fluids and other substances that do or may affect the waters of the state.

(k)

(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this title to the contrary, waters that are in areas of swamped-out bottomland hardwoods or swamped-out cropland shall be classified as protective of wildlife and humans that may come into contact with them, and shall maintain standards applicable to all downstream waters, but shall not be classified for the protection of fish and aquatic life.

(2) As used in this subsection (k):

(A) “Swamped-out bottomland hardwood” means an area subject to inundation or ponding of surface water that has resulted, or is resulting, in timber mortality or stress. The term does not include areas with a dominance of cypress or tupelo gum trees or areas in which the majority of the timber died prior to 1970; and

(B) “Swamped-out cropland” means an area that was previously in row crop cultivation or pasture but can no longer be used for such purpose due to inundation or ponding of surface water. “Swamped-out cropland” does not include wetland areas that have not been cultivated or in pasture since 1970 because of inundation or ponding of surface water.

(l)

(1) The board shall promulgate rules creating a system of incentives for alternatives to discharges to surface waters, such as land application and beneficial reuse of the wastewater.

(2) For the purpose of this subsection (l), “system of incentives” includes regulatory flexibility recognizing increased environmental performance and enhanced water quality under specified permitted activities through permit conditions pursuant to duly promulgated rules.

(m) The commissioner shall develop and submit to the board proposed rules necessary for accurate and consistent wet weather conveyance determinations. These rules shall include at a minimum:

(1) Standard procedures for making stream and wet weather conveyance determinations that take into consideration biology, geology, geomorphology, precipitation, hydrology and other scientifically based principles; and



(2) A certification program for department staff and other persons who wish to become certified hydrologic professionals.

§ 69-3-108. Licenses and Permits.

(a) Every person who is or is planning to carry on any of the activities outlined in subsection (b), other than a person who discharges into a publicly owned treatment works or who is a domestic discharger into a privately owned treatment works, or who is regulated under a general permit as described in subsection (f), shall file an application for a permit with the commissioner or, when necessary, for modification of such person's existing permit.

(b) It is unlawful for any person, other than a person who discharges into a publicly owned treatment works or a person who is a domestic discharger into a privately owned treatment works, to carry out any of the following activities, except in accordance with the conditions of a valid permit:

(1) The alteration of the physical, chemical, radiological, biological, or bacteriological properties of any waters of the state;

(2) The construction, installation, modification, or operation of any treatment works, or part thereof, or any extension or addition thereto;

(3) The increase in volume or strength of any wastes in excess of the permissive discharges specified under any existing permit;

(4) The development of a natural resource or the construction, installation, or operation of any establishment or any extension or modification thereof or addition thereto, the operation of which will or is likely to cause an increase in the discharge of wastes into the waters of the state or would otherwise alter the physical, chemical, radiological, biological or bacteriological properties of any waters of the state in any manner not already lawfully authorized;

(5) The construction or use of any new outlet for the discharge of any wastes into the waters of the state;

(6) The discharge of sewage, industrial wastes or other wastes into waters, or a location from which it is likely that the discharged substance will move into waters;

(7)

(A) The construction, installation, or operation of a liquid waste management system supporting an animal feeding operation that stables or confines as many as, or more than, the numbers of animals specified by federal law defining a large concentrated animal feeding operation;



(B) A state operating permit issued pursuant to this subdivision (b)(7) shall be enforceable only in regards to submission and maintenance of a current approved nutrient management plan;

(C) Animal feeding operations that are not required under this subdivision (b)(7) to have a permit may apply for and be issued a state operating permit. An animal feeding operation issued a state operating permit pursuant to this subdivision (b)(7) is required to conduct such operations in accordance with the permit;

(8) The discharge of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into a well or a location where it is likely that the discharged substance will move into a well, or the underground placement of fluids and other substances that do or may affect the waters of the state;

(9) The diversion of water through a flume for the purpose of generation of electric power by a utility; or

(10)

(A) Animal feeding operations that are required under the federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq.), to have a permit for concentrated animal feeding operations. Such operations must be conducted in accordance with the conditions of a valid national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) permit;

(B) Animal feeding operations that are not required under the federal Clean Water Act to have a permit for concentrated animal feeding operations may apply for and, if eligible under federal law, be issued a NPDES permit. An animal feeding operation issued a NPDES permit pursuant to this subdivision (b)(10)(B) is required to conduct such operations in accordance with the permit.

(c) Any person operating or planning to operate a sewerage system shall file an application with the commissioner for a permit or, when necessary, for modification of such person's existing permit. Unless a person holds a valid permit, it is unlawful to operate a sewerage system.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any person discharging into a septic tank connected only to a subsurface drainfield, or any person constructing or operating a sanitary landfill between March 25, 1980, and March 24, 1982, except in a county having a population of not less than sixty thousand two hundred fifty (60,250) nor more than sixty thousand three hundred fifty (60,350), according to the 1970 federal census or any subsequent federal census, as defined and regulated by §§ 68-211-101 - 68-211-115, to secure a permit; provided, that the exemption provided in this subsection (d) shall not exempt such person from any other provision of this part; and provided further, that any such person who is exempt from obtaining a permit for



constructing or operating a sanitary landfill between March 25, 1980, and March 24, 1982, shall not thereafter be required to obtain such permit.

(e) Applicants for permits that would authorize a new or expanded wastewater discharge into surface waters shall include in the application consideration of alternatives, including, but not limited to, land application and beneficial reuse of the wastewater.

(f) With regard to permits for activities related to the surface mining of coal:

(1) No permit shall be issued that would allow removal of coal from the earth from its original location by surface mining methods or surface access points to underground mining within one hundred feet (100') of the ordinary high water mark of any stream or allow overburden or waste materials from removal of coal from the earth by surface mining of coal to be disposed of within one hundred feet (100') of the ordinary high water mark of a stream; provided, however, that a permit may be issued or renewed for stream crossings, including, but not limited to, rail crossings, utilities crossings, pipeline crossings, minor road crossings, for operations to improve the quality of stream segments previously disturbed by mining and for activities related to and incidental to the removal of coal from its original location, such as transportation, storage, coal preparation and processing, loading and shipping operations within one hundred feet (100') of the ordinary high water mark of a stream if necessary due to site specific conditions that do not cause the loss of stream function and do not cause a discharge of pollutants in violation of water quality criteria. Nothing in this subdivision (f)(1) shall apply to placement of material from coal preparation and processing plants;

(2) Without limiting the applicability of this section, if the commissioner determines that surface coal mining at a particular site will violate water quality standards because acid mine drainage from the site will not be amenable to treatment with proven technology both during the permit period or subsequent to completion of mining activities, the permit shall be denied.

(g)

(1) The commissioner may grant permits authorizing the discharges or activities described in subsection (b), including, but not limited to, land application of wastewater, but in granting such permits shall impose such conditions, including effluent standards and conditions and terms of periodic review, as are necessary to accomplish the purposes of this part, and as are not inconsistent with the regulations promulgated by the board.

(2) Under no circumstances shall the commissioner issue a permit for an activity that would cause a condition of pollution either by itself or in combination with others.

(3) If a permit is required under this part for a public transportation project commissioned by a federal, state, or local government, the alternatives analysis



required by Tenn. Comp. R & Regs. 0400-40-07-.04(5) does not need to include alternative road locations but must include other measures to avoid and minimize impacts to resource values.

(4) In addition, the permits shall include:

(A) The most stringent effluent limitations and schedules of compliance, either promulgated by the board, required to implement any applicable water quality standards, necessary to comply with an area-wide waste treatment plan, or necessary to comply with other state or federal laws or regulations;

(B) A definite term, not to exceed five (5) years, for which the permit is valid. This term is subject to provisions for modification, revocation, or suspension of the permit;

(C) Monitoring, recording, reporting, and inspection requirements;

(D) In the case of permits authorizing discharges from publicly owned treatment works, terms and conditions requiring the permittee to enforce user and cost recovery charges, pretreatment standards, and toxic effluent limitations applicable to industrial users discharging into the treatment works; and

(E) In the case of permits authorizing permanent impacts to waters of the state, provision for adequate compensatory mitigation to not result in a condition of pollution, by mitigation banking, permittee-responsible mitigation, or in-lieu fee payments as approved by the department:

(i) No sponsor of an in-lieu fee instrument may accept in-lieu fee payments for a project in this state unless the sponsor's in-lieu fee instrument requires the sponsor, as to both new and previously sold in-lieu fee credits, to agree that the department may bring an enforcement action pursuant to subdivision (g)(4)(E)(ii) if the sponsor fails to complete land acquisition and initial physical and biological improvements by the third full growing season after the first advance credit in that service area is secured by a permittee, unless the district engineer for the United States army corps of engineers determines that more or less time is needed to plan and implement an in-lieu fee project;

(ii) If an in-lieu fee sponsor fails to complete land acquisition and initial physical and biological improvements by the third full growing season after the first advance credit in that service area is secured by a permittee, unless the district engineer for the United States army corps of engineers determines that more or less time is needed to plan and implement an in-lieu fee project, and the



sponsor's instrument complies with subdivision (g)(4)(E)(i), then the department may bring an enforcement action in the chancery court of Davidson County to require the in-lieu fee sponsor to solicit proposals to procure appropriate mitigation credits from qualified third parties to provide for equivalent compensatory mitigation;

(iii) For purposes of this subdivision (g)(4)(E), "equivalent compensatory mitigation" means mitigation equivalent, to the extent practicable as determined by the department, to the amount and nature of mitigation purchased by the original in-lieu fee payment; and

(iv) Proposals received by the in-lieu fee sponsor pursuant to an action brought by the department pursuant to subdivision (g)(4)(E)(ii) must be submitted for approval by the in-lieu fee sponsor to the department. To the extent permitted by federal law, upon approval by the department and the purchase of such mitigation credits by the in-lieu fee sponsor, the in-lieu fee sponsor is considered to have performed the original required mitigation.

(h) The commissioner may revoke, suspend, or modify any permit for cause, including:

(1) Violation of any terms or conditions of the permit or of any provision of this part;

(2) Obtaining the permit by misrepresentation or failing to disclose fully all relevant facts; or

(3) A change in any condition that requires either a temporary or permanent reduction or elimination of the permitted discharge.

(i) No permit under subsection (g) or (h) for the construction of any new outlet or for construction activities involved in the development of natural resources, for the construction of a new waste treatment system or for the modification or extension of an existing waste treatment system shall be issued by the commissioner until the plans have first been submitted to and approved by the commissioner. No such approval shall be construed as creating a presumption of correct operation nor as warranting by the commissioner that the approved facilities will reach the designated goals. If an environmental impact statement is required for any permit, the commissioner may require the applicant to pay for its preparation. Any such impact statement must also include and address economic and social impact.

(j) Any permit procedure or other action required by or undertaken in accordance with this section or part shall be conducted in accordance with title 13, chapter 18, when the permit or action involves a major energy project, as defined in § 13-18-102.



(k) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or circumscribe the authority of the commissioner to issue emergency orders as specified in § 69-3-109.

(l) Where the commissioner finds that a category of activities or discharges would be appropriately regulated under a general permit, the commissioner may issue such a permit. Any person conducting activities in the category covered by a general permit shall not be required to file individual applications for permits except as provided in specific requirements of the general permit. Any person conducting activities covered under a general permit may be required by the commissioner to file an application for any individual permit. Upon the issuance of an individual permit to a person with a general permit, the applicability of the general permit to that permitted activity or discharge shall be terminated. Any person who holds an individual permit for an activity or discharge covered under a general permit may request that the individual permit be revoked. Upon such revocation, the activity or discharge shall become subject to the general permit.

(m) Notwithstanding subsection (g), upon application by a person who discharges into groundwaters of the state and who is subject to a permit issued pursuant to the Hazardous Waste Management Act, compiled in title 68, chapter 212, the commissioner may issue variances from the applicable water quality standards, criteria, or classification for groundwater; provided, that:

(1) The waters to which the variance applies are not used as a current source of drinking water and such use is not reasonably anticipated for the term of the variance and a reasonable time thereafter;

(2) The applicant demonstrates that such discharges will not pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment as defined in Tenn. Comp. R. & Reg. 1200-01-11-.06(6)(e)(2) (reserved) in effect on April 1, 1988, and will not impair any actual, current uses other than those affected by the variance;

(3) Variances will be effective for a specific term, not to exceed the effective term of the permit;

(4) The variance is consistent with the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq.), and the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. § 300f et seq.); and

(5) The variance provided for under this subsection (m) shall be applied for and issued in accordance with procedures regarding the issuance of permits as required by regulations issued under this chapter.

(n)

(1) A chief administrative officer of a county highway department does not violate this chapter by repairing or causing the repair of up to four hundred feet (400') of



highway or road in an emergency situation, if immediate repairs are necessary to protect human safety and welfare, and if such repairs comply with rules and regulations promulgated by the board that regulate the manner in which the repairs are made. Such officer need not obtain a permit prior to making such repairs under such circumstances.

(2) As soon as practicable, the chief administrative officer of a county highway department shall notify the commissioner by telephone that an emergency has arisen and that such chief administrative officer intends to make repairs in response to such emergency. The giving of such notice shall not be construed to authorize the commissioner to terminate such repairs.

(3) Within ten (10) days of the completion of any highway or road repair made pursuant to this subsection (n), the chief administrative officer of the county highway department ordering such repair shall notify the commissioner, in writing, of the action taken and the nature of the emergency necessitating such immediate repair.

(o) The following activities do not require a permit under this section:

(1) The removal of downed trees by dragging or winching and without grading or reshaping of the stream channel;

(2) The placement of downed trees on stream banks for erosion protection; and

(3) The planting of vegetation on stream banks.

(p) Unless the applicant agrees otherwise, when an individual landowner applies for a permit for debris removal or stream bank stabilization activities, the commissioner shall either issue or deny the permit or take action scheduling a public hearing on the application within sixty (60) days of receipt of a complete application; provided further, however, that the staff of the division will communicate orally or in writing to the applicant within fifteen (15) days of receipt of any such application.

(q)

(1) The alteration of a wet weather conveyance, as defined in § 69-3-103, by any activity is permitted by this subsection (q) and shall require no notice or approval; provided, that it is done in accordance with all of the following conditions:

(A) The activity may not result in the discharge of waste or other substances that may be harmful to humans or wildlife;

(B) Material may not be placed in a location or manner so as to impair surface water flow into or out of any wetland area;

(C)



(i) Sediment shall be prevented from entering other waters of the state;

(ii) Erosion and sediment controls shall be designed according to the size and slope of disturbed or drainage areas to detain runoff and trap sediment and shall be properly selected, installed, and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and good engineering practices;

(iii) Erosion and sediment control measures shall be in place and functional before earth moving operations begin, and shall be constructed and maintained throughout the construction period. Temporary measures may be removed at the beginning of the work day, but shall be replaced at the end of the work day;

(iv) Checkdams shall be utilized where runoff is concentrated. Clean rock, log, sandbag or straw bale checkdams shall be properly constructed to detain runoff and trap sediment. Checkdams or other erosion control devices are not to be constructed in stream. Clean rock can be of various type and size, depending on the application. Clean rock shall not contain fines, soils or other wastes or contaminants; and

(D) Appropriate steps shall be taken to ensure that petroleum products or other chemical pollutants are prevented from entering waters of the state. All spills shall be reported to the appropriate emergency management agency and to the division. In the event of a spill, measures shall be taken immediately to prevent pollution of waters of the state, including groundwater.

(2) There shall be no additional conditions upon a person's activity within a wet weather conveyance. This subdivision (q)(2) does not apply to national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) permits.

(r) A person desiring to alter a specific water of the state may request a determination from the commissioner that it is a wet weather conveyance and submit a report from a qualified hydrologic professional in support of the request. If the report contains all information that is required in rules promulgated by the board, and in accordance with department procedures and guidance, and is certified by a qualified hydrologic professional to be true, accurate and complete and, if submitted after promulgation of the rules required by § 69-3-105(m), contains all information that is required in those rules, then the determination made in the report shall be presumed to be correct, unless the commissioner notifies the person, in writing, within thirty (30) days of submittal of the report, that the commissioner has affirmatively determined that there is a significant question about whether the water of the state in question is a stream or a wet weather conveyance and states the reasons for that determination. In that event, the



commissioner must, within thirty (30) days following the initial notification, determine whether the water of the state in question is a stream or a wet weather conveyance and notify the person in writing of that decision and the reasons for that determination. A person may appeal a determination by the commissioner that the specific water is a stream by filing a petition for appeal with the board within thirty (30) days of receiving the commissioner's decision. For purposes of this subsection (r), a qualified hydrologic professional is a person holding a bachelor's degree in biology, geology, ecology, engineering or related sciences, having at least five (5) years of relevant experience in making hydrologic determinations and who has been certified as a hydrologic professional pursuant to rules promulgated by the board.

(s) Any NPDES permit issued pursuant to this section to a local governmental entity administering a municipal separate storm sewer system shall not impose post-construction storm water requirements, except to the extent necessary to comply with the minimum requirements of federal law. Any such NPDES permit that includes numeric or narrative effluent limitations to manage post-construction storm water shall allow the local governmental entity administering a municipal separate storm sewer system discretion in selecting measures to meet any such effluent limitations. These numeric or narrative effluent limitations to manage post-construction stormwater shall be adopted by the board as rules pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5.

(t) This state shall not require any local governmental entity that administers a municipal separate storm sewer system under a NPDES permit issued pursuant to this section to impose control measures for post-construction storm water that exceed the minimum requirements of federal law. Any local governmental entity that adopts control measures that exceed the minimum requirements of federal law must do so by ordinance or resolution, as appropriate, by the local legislative body upon a majority vote. This subsection (t) shall not apply to any ordinance or resolution in effect on April 23, 2016 but shall not preclude a local governmental entity that administers a municipal separate storm sewer system from making changes consistent with subsection (s) and this subsection (t). When a local governmental entity seeks coverage under any future version of the NPDES permit after April 23, 2016, such ordinance or resolution shall comply with subsection (s) and this subsection (t). The local government entity shall provide in writing the control measures that exceed federal minimum requirements to the local legislative body at least thirty (30) days in advance of a vote in order to provide for a public comment period.

(u)

(1) Notwithstanding any other law, a person who has contracted for the right to store water in a reservoir owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall have exclusive rights to any return flows generated directly or indirectly to that reservoir by the person. The rights conferred by this subsection (u) shall be subject to any regulatory requirements imposed by the commissioner and to the



availability to the person of unused storage capacity within the reservoir to store such return flows.

(2) As used in this subsection (u), “return flow” means water that is discharged directly or indirectly to a reservoir from a water reclamation facility.

(v)

(1) Compliance with a NPDES permit issued under this section shall be deemed compliance for purposes of §§ 69-3-109; 69-3-114(a); 69-3-114(b) with respect to this part or any rule, regulation, or standard of water quality promulgated by the board; 69-3-115; 69-3-116; 69-3-117; and 69-3-118(a), except for any standard imposed under Section 307 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act for a toxic pollutant injurious to human health.

(2) Compliance includes the discharge of pollutants for which no standard or limit is set forth in the permit if:

(A) The permit holder complies with applicable reporting and disclosure requirements under this part; and

(B) The discharge of pollutants is disclosed to the department in such a manner that the discharge is within the reasonable contemplation of the department at the time of issuance of the final permit.

(w) Watershed activities conducted in accordance with a site-specific design developed through full application of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Practice Standard 580 (Tennessee) and NRCS Engineering Field Handbook, Chapter 16 Streambank and Shoreline Protection, and subject to NRCS oversight as a federal action, do not result in pollution and do not require compensatory mitigation. Such watershed activities shall be regulated under a general permit for aquatic alterations pursuant to subsection (l). The commissioner shall draft an initial general permit authorizing such watershed activities, conduct public notice in accordance with the board's rules, and issue the initial general permit no later than December 31, 2020. Thereafter, the commissioner shall ensure timely renewal of the general permit.

