

FINAL

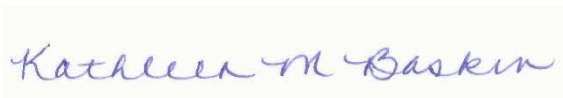
Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification  
For the 2026 Proposed NPDES Permit Modification  
For the South Essex Wastewater Treatment Facility  
Permit No. MA0100501

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), having reviewed the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Region 1’s June 26, 2026 draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit modification (“2026 draft NPDES Permit Modification”) proposing to modify portions of the NPDES permit (Permit No. MA0100501) issued by EPA on December 22, 2025 to the South Essex Sewerage District (“Permittee”), and specified co-permittees, for the South Essex Wastewater Treatment Facility (“Facility”) to discharge to Salem Sound (Segment MA95-56) (“2025 Final NPDES Permit”), and having presented for public notice from July 15, 2026 through August 14, 2026 MassDEP’s proposed Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification for the 2026 draft NPDES Permit Modification and received no comments, hereby certifies that there is a reasonable assurance that the proposed discharge will not violate applicable Massachusetts water quality requirements, if made in accordance with the 2025 Final NPDES Permit as modified by the provisions of the 2026 draft NPDES Permit Modification, and provided that the 2026 draft NPDES Permit Modification is not modified in a manner inconsistent with this certification.

The 2025 Final NPDES Permit for the Facility incorporates in Section I the conditions provided by the Water Quality Certification (“WQC”) of that permit issued by MassDEP on May 9, 2025. Those WQC conditions, together with the other terms and conditions contained in the 2025 Final NPDES Permit, were determined by MassDEP to ensure that the proposed discharge will comply with the applicable provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act Sections 208(e), 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307, and with appropriate requirements of State law, including, without limitation, the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, M.G.L. c. 21, §§ 26-53, and the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards published at 314 CMR 4.00. MassDEP has determined that the terms and conditions of the 2026 draft NPDES Permit Modification do not necessitate the inclusion of additional conditions in this WQC, provided that the 2026 Final NPDES Permit Modification does not modify the State 401 Certification Conditions in Section I of the 2025 Final NPDES Permit.

To meet the requirements of Massachusetts laws, each of the conditions in the 2026 draft NPDES Permit Modification shall not be made less stringent unless, after consultation, MassDEP agrees that certification remains appropriate in consideration of the relevant water quality requirements.

Signed this 26<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2026



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Kathleen M. Baskin, P.E.  
Assistant Commissioner  
Bureau of Water Resources  
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection