

# Pocono Township sewer project applies to add Kalahari water park

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February 25, 2013 12:00 AM

Kalahari Resorts' plan to bring central sewer to its proposed Tobyhanna Township property is picking up steam.

The Delaware River Basin Commission soon will consider an application from the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority to expand its coverage area of the new Pocono Township sewer project and the authority's treatment plant.

The new coverage area would include all of the properties around Pocono Manor owned by Pocono Manor Investors LP. Those properties include the proposed Kalahari Resort in Tobyhanna Township.

If approved, the plan likely wouldn't go online until late 2016.

The commission will discuss the plan at its March 5 public meeting at the commission's office in West Trenton, N.J.

Kalahari Resorts is proposing a \$350 million, 150-acre water park resort in Pocono Manor that is planned to be built in three phases through the next decade.

The Wisconsin-based company hopes to begin construction on Phase 1 in the spring with an eye toward opening in late 2014.

Pocono Manor Investors, which currently owns the Kalahari's intended property and 2,000 more acres in the area, has enough sewage capacity with an on-site sewage treatment plant to cover Kalahari's needs for the first phase.

The second phase is where Kalahari needs an off-site plan. The proposed plan is to hook into Pocono Township's soon-to-be-finished sewer system.

That requires construction of a piping system to ship Kalahari's wastewater to Swiftwater, where the central sewer system begins. The waste would then be pumped to the wastewater treatment plant in Stroudsburg, where it would be treated and released into McMichael Creek, almost 20 miles away from the groundwater source where it came from.

Officials from the environmental group Brodhead Watershed Association say that plan could be detrimental to the groundwater supply around the Kalahari property, and also could harm the flow of nearby Indian Run and Swiftwater Creek.

The plan before the Basin Commission says not only will the 150-acre Kalahari property hook in, but also the Inn at Pocono Manor and a planned retail center at Interstate 380 and routes 314 and 940 also will hook in.

Once those properties hook in, Pocono Manor Investors LP will abandon its on-site sewer system, according to the plan.

Any approval from the four-state commission is contingent on all local and state approvals of an amended Act 537 plan, the blueprint of the new sewer system.

The state's Department of Environmental Protection will examine the changes to the Act 537 plan when all corresponding municipalities have approved the changes.

Pocono Township approved the changes Monday, and Hamilton Township likely will consider them at a meeting at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, according to project engineer Sam D'Alessandro of R.K.R. Hess Associates.

Once approved, the plan goes to the DEP.

"If Hamilton Township approves it on (Tuesday), the DEP will have it on (Wednesday)," D'Alessandro said.

Department spokeswoman Colleen Connolly said there is a 90-day guarantee from DEP to rule on a plan, but the department will try to rule sooner than that.