

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

IN THE MATTER OF:)
)
Donnie Peebles)
Moulton, Lawrence County, Alabama)

PROPOSED
ADMINISTRATIVE
ORDER NO: 21-XXX-AP

FINDINGS

Pursuant to the provisions of the Alabama Environmental Management Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22- 22A-17, as amended, the Alabama Air Pollution Control Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-28-1 to 22-28-23, as amended, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (hereinafter, the “Department” or “ADEM”) Administrative Code of Regulations (hereinafter, “ADEM Admin. Code R.”) promulgated pursuant thereto, and the federal Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401 to 7671q, *as amended*, the Department makes the following FINDINGS:

1. Donnie Peebles (hereinafter, “Peebles”) owns real property located at 18898 Alabama Highway 33 in Moulton, Lawrence County, Alabama (hereinafter, the “Site”) where he operates a tree service.
2. The Department is a duly constituted department of the State of Alabama pursuant to Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22-22A-17, as amended.
3. Pursuant to Ala. Code § 22-22A-4(n), as amended, the Department is the state air pollution control agency for the purposes of the federal Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401 to 7671q, as amended. In addition, the Department is authorized to administer and

enforce the provisions of the Alabama Air Pollution Control Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-28-1 to 22-28-23, *as amended*.

4. ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)1 states that "...open burning must take place on the property on which the combustible fuel originates."

5. ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01(2)(d) states that "Permission to open burn under the provisions of this paragraph is revoked during the months of May, June, July, August, September, and October in Baldwin, DeKalb, Etowah, Jefferson, Lawrence, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Morgan, Shelby, Russell, and Talladega Counties."

6. On May 5, 2021, the Department received two complaints regarding unauthorized open burning of imported vegetation occurring at the Site.

7. On May 6, 2021, Department personnel conducted an investigation of the Site and observed active burning of imported vegetation being conducted during the Burn Ban.

8. Pursuant to Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18)c., *as amended*, in determining the amount of any penalty, the Department must give consideration to the seriousness of the violations, including any irreparable harm to the environment and any threat to the health or safety of the public; the standard of care manifested by such person; the economic benefit which delayed compliance may confer upon such person; the nature, extent and degree of success of such person's efforts to minimize or mitigate the effects of such violations upon the environment; such person's history of previous violations; and the ability of such person to pay such penalty. Any civil penalty assessed pursuant to this authority shall not exceed \$25,000.00 for each violation, provided however, that the total penalty assessed in an order issued by the Department shall not exceed \$250,000.00. Each

day such violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. In arriving at this civil penalty, the Department has considered the following:

A. SERIOUSNESS OF THE VIOLATION: Peebles conducted unauthorized open burning of construction debris. The Department considers this violation to be serious.

B. THE STANDARD OF CARE: There appeared to be no care taken by Peebles to comply with the applicable requirements of the ADEM Admin. Code rs. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)1 and 335-3-3-.01(2)(d).

C. ECONOMIC BENEFIT WHICH DELAYED COMPLIANCE MAY HAVE CONFERRED: Peebles likely derived an economic benefit by not legally disposing of the imported vegetation.

D. EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION UPON THE ENVIRONMENT: There were no efforts by Peebles to mitigate possible effects of this violation upon the environment at the time the violation occurred.

E. HISTORY OF PREVIOUS VIOLATIONS: On July 15, 2019, Department personnel conducted a complaint investigation of property located on County Road 501 in Moulton, and observed evidence of unauthorized open burning of imported vegetation being conducted during the Burn Ban and within 500 feet of multiple residential dwellings. The Department issued a Warning Letter to Peebles regarding the unauthorized open burning. During a phone conversation on August 8, 2019, the Department Inspector discussed the open burning regulations with Peebles and advised him to cease all unauthorized open burning. From May to July of 2020, the Department received multiple complaints regarding unauthorized open burning of imported vegetation being conducted

at the Site. During the June 3, 2020 inspection, Department personnel found evidence of unauthorized open burning of a large quantity of imported vegetation being conducted during the Burn Ban. The Department Inspector left guidance from the Department on vegetation clearing.

F. THE ABILITY TO PAY: Peebles has not alleged an inability to pay the civil penalty.

G. OTHER FACTORS: The Department has carefully considered the six statutory penalty factors enumerated in Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18)c., *as amended*, as well as the need for timely and effective enforcement, and has concluded that a civil penalty herein is appropriate (*See* “Attachment A”, which is hereby incorporated into these Findings).

ORDER

Based upon the foregoing FINDINGS and pursuant to Ala. Code §§22-22A-5(10), 22-22A-5(12), 22-22-5(18), and 22-28-18, *as amended*, it is hereby ORDERED:

A. That, not later than forty-five days after the issuance of this Order, Peebles shall pay to the Department a civil penalty in the amount of \$2,500.00 for the violation cited herein. Said penalty shall be made payable to the Alabama Department of Environment Management by certified or cashier’s check and shall be submitted to:

Office of General Counsel
Alabama Department of
Environmental Management
P.O. Box 301463
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1463

B. That, immediately upon receipt of this Order and continuing thereafter, Peebles shall ensure immediate and future compliance with ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)1 and 335-3-3-.01(2)(d).

C. That, should any provision of this Order be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction or the Environmental Management Commission to be inconsistent with Federal or State law and therefore unenforceable, the remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

D. Except as otherwise set forth herein, this Order is not and shall not be interpreted to be a permit or modification of an existing permit under federal, State or local law, and shall not be construed to waive or relieve Peebles of his obligations to comply in the future with any permit or other written direction from the Department.

E. That, issuance of this Administrative Order does not preclude the Department from seeking criminal fines or other appropriate sanctions or relief against Peebles for the violations cited herein.

F. That, failure to comply with the provisions of this Administrative Order shall constitute cause for commencement of legal action by the Department against Peebles for recovery of additional civil penalties, criminal fines, or other appropriate sanctions or relief.

ORDERED and ISSUED this _____ day of _____, 2021.

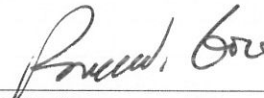
Lance R. LeFleur, Director
Alabama Department of Environmental
Management
1400 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, Alabama 36110-2059
(334) 271-7700

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Ronald W. Gore, do hereby certify that I have served this Proposed Administrative Order upon the person(s) listed below by sending the same, postage paid, through the United States Mail **9489 0090 0027 6294 8944 75** with instructions to forward and return receipt, to:

Mr. Donnie Peebles
18898 Alabama Highway 33
Moulton, Alabama 35650

DONE this the 28th day of September, 2021.



Ronald W. Gore
Chief - Air Division
Alabama Department of
Environmental Management

ATTACHMENT A

Donnie Peebles
Moulton, Lawrence County, AL

Violation*	Number of Violations*	Seriousness of Violation*	Standard of Care*	History of Previous Violations*	
Unauthorized open burning	1	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$500	
					Total of Three Factors
TOTAL PER FACTOR		\$2,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$3,500

Adjustments to Amount of Initial Penalty	
Mitigating Factors (-)	
Ability to Pay (-)	
Other Factors (+/-)	- \$1,500
Total Adjustments (+/-) <i>Enter at Right</i>	\$0

Economic Benefit (+)	\$500
Amount of Initial Penalty	\$4,000
Total Adjustments (+/-)	- \$1,500
FINAL PENALTY	\$2,500.00

Footnotes

* See the "Department's Findings" portion of the Order for a detailed description of each violation and the penalty factors.