

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S SUMMARY REPORT
8:30 a.m., July 24, 2008
Regional Water Board Hearing Room
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
Santa Rosa, California

ITEM: 2

SUBJECT: Bodega Farms, Sonoma County, NPDES Permit for Abalone Rearing Facility, WDID No. 1B82022OSON (NPDES Permit No. CA0024481)

DISCUSSION

Ocean Farms, Inc. owns and operates Bodega Farms, Inc., a red abalone rearing facility. The facility discharges once-through rearing tank wastewater to the surf zone of Bodega Bay, waters of the United States. The discharge was previously governed by Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 98-22 (NPDES Permit No. CA0024481) adopted by the Regional Water Board on March 26, 1998, which authorized the discharge of up to 6.5 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater used in the rearing and processing of fish and abalone. Bodega Farms, in its Report of Waste Discharge, requested a reduced maximum discharge volume of 0.45 mgd and limited its operation to abalone rearing for the duration of the permit term. The facility anticipates a year-round operation, but may not operate during periods when suitable intake water is not available.

The seawater system is a once-through system whereby seawater supplied for abalone larvae and juveniles is pumped from the Estero Americano to holding tanks, filtered, then transferred into fiberglass raceway tanks for aquaculture of abalone. Abalone larvae are allowed to settle out in the raceway tanks or in a nursery. Juvenile abalone seeds are grown on fiberglass wavy plates and feed on naturally occurring diatoms in the intake water when small, and are fed brown kelp as they grow larger. The facility anticipates a maximum harvestable weight of 11,600 pounds per year and a maximum weight at any one time of 15,000 pounds. All flows leaving the raceways and tanks are plumbed to a trough that detains the majority of the particulate found in daily flows. The remainder of particulate matter is siphoned to the sediment tank and left to evaporate. During tank cleaning, the tanks are drained slowly to within 1 inch of the bottom, and any particulate matter is siphoned to the sediment tank and left to evaporate. The trough is also periodically cleaned into the sediment tank.

Except for the reduction in permitted flow and anticipated use, the tentative permit includes no major changes from the previous permit. However, the draft Order includes new monitoring requirements for Ocean Plan Table B constituents that were not required by the previous permit.

A copy of the draft permit was mailed to interested agencies and persons and a public comment period was noticed in the local newspaper as well as on the Regional Water Board website. Bodega Farms submitted minor comments on the draft Order, which were incorporated into the final Order.

PRELIMINARY STAFF
RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Order No R1-2008-0063 as proposed.