

ITEM: 29

SUBJECT: SunnyGem LLC, Sandridge Partners, LP, and McCarthy Family Farms, Inc., Kern County

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of an Initial Study and Negative Declaration and new Waste Discharge Requirements*

BACKGROUND: SunnyGem, LLC, and Sandridge Partners, LP (Discharger), jointly own and operate the Spicer City Juice Processing Plant (Plant) between Buttonwillow and Lost Hills in Kern County. McCarthy Family Farms, Inc., owns some of the 2,200 acres of land proposed for wastewater application.

Discharge of pomegranate juice processing wastewater from the Plant is currently regulated by the waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for small food processors and wineries, but the proposed expansion makes it too large to be covered. The expansion would allow the Plant to process juice from other fruits and operate most of the year, increasing wastewater flows from under 0.1 million gallons per year to as much as 6.7 million gallons per year.

Groundwater is of poor quality and the discharge is not expected to degrade groundwater quality. In addition to tentative Waste Discharge Requirements, staff prepared an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project.

ISSUES: Staff addressed written comments from the Discharger and the Department of Fish and Game with minor changes to the tentative Waste Discharge Requirements and the Initial Study. There are no known unresolved issues.

RECOMMENDATION Staff recommends that the Board adopt the Resolution approving the Initial Study and adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration and that the Board adopt the tentative Waste Discharge Requirements.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _____
4/5 October 2012
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