

ITEM: 9

SUBJECT: Caruthers Raisin Packing Company, Inc., Raisin Packing Plant, and Mr. Jon Robinson (New), Fresno County

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of new Waste Discharge Requirements.*

BACKGROUND: Caruthers Raisin Packing Company, Inc. (Caruthers Raisin) operates a Raisin Processing Plant (Plant) where it receives, washes, stores, packages, and distributes raisins for local growers. The Plant has been in operation since 1985. Originally, the discharge of raisin process wastewater was waived under Resolution 82-036. Over the years, the Plant and its discharge have expanded, prompting occasional nuisance and odor complaints and resulting in iron and manganese groundwater degradation beneath the site.

Starting in 2006, Caruthers Raisin implemented several treatment and control measures to improve the quality of its discharge. Wastewater at the Plant is screened and aerated to remove suspended solids and reduce biochemical oxygen demand (BOD). The treated wastewater is stored in aboveground tanks and discharged via sprinklers to 27 acres of adjacent farmland, a portion of which is owned Mr. Jon Robinson, for irrigation on crops. The proposed Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) set a monthly average flow limit of 0.13 million gallons per day with an annual flow limit of 25 million gallons, set an EC monthly average effluent limit of 1,000 $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$ with a 12-month rolling average limit of 500 $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$ over source water, and include a cycle average BOD loading limit of 150 lbs/acre/day. Additionally, the proposed WDRs require Caruthers Raisin to prepare a salinity control plan and nutrient and wastewater management plan.

ISSUES: Comments received on the tentative WDRs expressed concerns that the BOD loading was not restrictive enough to protect groundwater and to deal with legacy issues associated with organic overloading of the disposal area. However, a recent review of all groundwater data, including data collected after the comments were received, shows improvement in groundwater quality beneath the site. Iron concentrations fell below water quality objectives and manganese concentrations were six times lower than previous sampling results.

The proposed WDRs include additional provisions that require Caruthers Raisin to prepare a detailed engineering evaluation of its treatment system and complete a 2-year site specific loading

study and groundwater evaluation to verify that BOD loading rates are protective.

If deemed appropriate, a separate order will address legacy groundwater issues.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the WDRs.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review ___PEP___
2February 2012

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