

ITEM: 28

SUBJECT: Bell Carter Olive Company, Inc., and City of Corning, Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant, Tehama County

BOARD ACTION: Consideration of NPDES Permit Renewal

BACKGROUND: Bell Carter Olive Company, Inc. owns and operates an industrial wastewater treatment plant to treat olive processing wastewater. The property is owned by the City of Corning. The treatment system consists of an influent pump station, influent metering and sampling equipment, a two stage extended aeration lagoon system (configured as Class II Surface Impoundments and regulated by separate WDRs in Order No. 5-00-114), followed by an ultrafiltration membrane solids separation process prior to being discharged to the Sacramento River through a diffuser combined with City of Corning wastewater treatment plant effluent discharges. On a regular basis, pond solids are removed utilizing a floating hydraulic dredge for centrifuge dewatering. Dewatered solids are then trucked to a suitable landfill for disposal.

The proposed permit has equal or more stringent effluent limitations for all constituents except for ammonia, BOD, and TSS. The relaxation of the ammonia limits is based on new information that was not available at the time of the previous permit including a new mixing zone study and updated effluent and receiving water data. BOD and TSS annual average effluent limitations in the previous order were based on rolling production values, whereas the proposed permit correctly implements fixed annual average effluent limitations based on reasonable measure of actual production of the facility. New effluent limitations for copper, zinc, and iron have been established in the proposed permit. The Discharger is expected to be able to comply with all effluent limitations and there are no interim effluent limitations in the permit or as part of a separate time schedule order. Special studies and technical reports required by the proposed permit include: chronic toxicity study to identify potential sources of chronic toxicity, mixing zone/dilution confirmation study to verify existing modeling results, and a treatability study to assess the treatment potential for each discrete treatment train at the facility. The proposed permit includes a compliance schedule for the color of the discharge and requires the Discharger to implement modifications and upgrades as necessary to address the discoloration nuisance caused by the discharge within the receiving water body. The Discharger has 5 years from the effective date of the proposed permit to complete the improvements for color.

The final blended effluent from the facility consists of treated wastewater from three different sources; Pond 6, Pond 7, or the ultrafiltration

membrane process. The current permit did not require the Discharger to report what percentage of the final blended effluent was attributable to each source. The proposed permit requires the Discharger to monitor internal flow from each of these sources and also requires that the weekly and monthly monitoring be done every time the flow from the ultrafiltration membrane process, as a percentage of total final blended effluent flow, changes by more than 20%. This new requirement for monitoring and reporting should ensure that the Discharger is consistently providing representative effluent sampling.

The Tentative Order issued on 16 January 2015, included effluent limitations based on USEPA's 2013 recommended ammonia criteria. Because a separate basin planning effort is underway to evaluate the appropriate methodology to implement USEPA's 2013 criteria, on 3 March 2015, staff issued a supplemental notice to the Discharger and interested parties noting proposed changes to the Tentative Order that would follow USEPA's 1999 recommended ammonia criteria instead of the 2013 Criteria. The Order in the agenda package implements the 1999 Criteria. Included for the Board's consideration is a change sheet that identifies the necessary changes to the Order if the Board instead decides to regulate ammonia using the 2013 criteria.

ISSUES

At this time, the Discharger and other parties are reviewing staff response to comments and revisions to the tentative permit. It is unknown at this time whether or not this item is contested.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the proposed order.

Mgmt. Review BJS
Legal Review _____

16-17 April 2015 Board Meeting
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
1685 E. Street
Fresno, CA 93706