

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION**

STATEMENT OF BASIS  
APPLICATION FOR  
NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) PERMIT  
AND  
WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS  
TO DISCHARGE TO STATE WATERS

Public Notice No. 7-01-03  
Application NPDES No. CA7000010  
Permit No. 01-003

Kent SeaTech Corporation  
P.O. Box 757  
Mecca, CA 92254

On the basis of preliminary staff review and application of lawful standards and regulations, the Regional Board proposed to adopt waste discharge requirements for the discharge. The tentative proposed determinations are described below.

I. Description of Proposed Discharge:

Kent SeaTech Corporation submitted an application to obtain a NPDES Permit for their fish farm operation at Mecca in the County of Riverside. Discharger operates a 16-acre fish culture facility. The primary species of culture is the Hybrid Stripped Bass. Annual production at the facility is about 3.5 million pounds. In addition, facility also supports Tilapia, Hybrid Carp and Sacramento Blackfish as necessary for particulate removal.

The facility is operated in a semi-closed environment where water is recycled for reuse at the fish farm. Water supply is received from groundwater wells. Kent SeaTech and outside vendors produce and supply small fingerlings that are raised in a series of circular shaped fish production tanks. Each of these tanks is supplied with oxygen. An air stripping process removes carbon dioxide produced in the tank. Water destined for recycling leaves these tanks and flows into an open channel where a portion of the particulates (VSS) are consumed by Tilapia and/or Carp. Water exiting the open channel continues into a "Suspended Media Ammonia Removal Technology" (SMART) system for which the discharger has filed a patent application. This water is biologically treated in SMART to remove ammonia and nitrites and is finally distributed to a "constructed wetland" system. At the end of this system, the treated water is recycled back to the fish tanks for reuse via pumps. Presently, part of the wastewater from the tanks is distributed to three duck hunting clubs and an agricultural farm located next to the facility. The discharger has future plans to incorporate additional potential users of the wastewater for agricultural operations. The remaining excess water is discharged into the Coachella Valley Storm Channel.

Fish are grown in 96 circular tanks, one (1) circular raceway and a tilapia channel comprising about 2.8 surface acres of water. The facility supports two (2) nitrification reactor vessels (SMART), of approximately 1.2 surface acres and approximately 66.2 surface acres of constructed wetlands for water clarification, nitrification and denitrification. There are also 15 ponds totaling approximately 25 acres on the south side of the property that treats water for reuse on the fish farm.

II. Basis for Discharge Specifications

Effluent discharged from this facility could contain pollutants in sufficient quantities to effect receiving water quality. Pursuant to Section 13263, Article 4, Chapter 4 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act, the Regional Boards are required to issue Waste Discharge Requirements for discharge that could affect the quality of the State's waters. Furthermore, Federal Regulations 40 CFR 122.1 requires the issuance of NPDES Permits, for pollutants discharged from a point source to the waters of the United States. The draft discharge requirements contain specific discharge limitations for selected pollutants. The rationals for each of the limitation is as follows:

Constituents

Basis for Limitations

pH

pH is a measure of Hydrogen Ion concentration in the water. A range specified between 6 to 9 ensures suitability of the biological life. This limitation has been adopted in the Basin Plan of the region.

Dissolved Oxygen (DO)

The amount of molecular oxygen dissolved in water can be depressed due to the presence of Micro-organisms consuming oxygen in the process of breaking down substrate in the wastewater. The limit 5.0 mg/L has been adopted from the water quality objectives of Basin Plan of the Region.

BOD

These concentration limitations are based on the implementation plan of the Water Quality Control Plan of the Colorado River Basin Region (Basin Plan).

Total Suspended Solids (TSS)

High levels of suspended solids can adversely impact aquatic habitat. Untreated or improperly treated municipal wastewater can contain high amounts of suspended solids.

III. Written Comments

Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on these draft waste discharge requirements. Comments should be submitted in writing by March 13, 2001. All comments received by this date will be considered in the formulation of the final permit.

### Public Hearing

The Waste Discharge Requirements will be considered by the Regional Board at a public hearing to be held at the City of La Quinta City Council Chambers, 78-495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253, on May 9, 2001.

### Waste Discharge Requirements Appeal

Any person may petition the State Board to review the decision of the Regional Board regarding waste discharge requirements. A petition must be made within 30 days of the Regional Board's public hearing.

### Additional Information

For additional information, interested persons may write to the following address or call Sheila Ault of the Regional Board staff at (760) 776-8960.

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