

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2010

Prepared on May 28, 2010

ITEM NUMBER: 8

SUBJECT: Rescission of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Order No. 01-101, Pacific Mushroom Farm, San Mateo County

KEY INFORMATION:

Plant Location: 6150 Cabrillo Highway, San Mateo County
Discharge Type: Mushroom production wastewater and domestic wastewater
Design Discharge Flowrate: 0.072 million gallons per day (mgd)
Treatment: Oxidation pond
Disposal: Evaporation/Percolation pond or spray irrigation disposal
Reclamation: None
Existing Orders: WDRs Order No. 01-101
This Action: Rescind Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 01-101

SUMMARY

Staff recommends the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) rescind Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 01-101. All mushroom production has ceased, all personnel have departed, and all structures appear locked shut. Therefore, the mushroom farm discharges no wastewater.

BACKGROUND

The Water Board began regulating wastewater discharges from the Pacific Mushroom Farm in 1976. Since then, most of the eight large growing sheds have fallen into disrepair, wastewater flow has declined with reduced production, and equipment dedicated to the treatment and disposal of the facility's wastewater wore out. At last, to retain their longstanding livelihoods, many of the farm's workers mortgaged their assets to purchase the farm from the bank that had come to own it. But they could not ultimately realize an adequate return, and all were forced to leave.

In March 2007, in response to a spill from the pump station to the nearby un-named creek, the Executive Officer required the Discharger to retain a consultant to evaluate the treatment/disposal system's status and to recommend measures to return the system to good repair. Water Board staff confirmed that the Discharger effected most of the recommended measures but the Discharger proposed to defer dredging the oxidation pond until the summer of 2008. However, by then the operation had foundered. A few personnel remained, apparently to close up the growing sheds. Finally, nobody worked at the farm anymore.

DISCUSSION

Staff has been unable to contact any of the people who once managed the mushroom farm. A recent inspection determined that the creek had reasserted its flow through the pump station. The stream, which drains to the ocean several hundred yards away, appeared clear and free of pollutants. Recent staff inspections determined that native vegetation has overgrown the oxidation pond, which apparently no longer impounds water. The site appears to be stable:

where it's not paved, it's overgrown. The Discharger needs to do no more work to stabilize the facility.

COMMENTS

Mr. Rick Salgado, Pacific Mushroom Farm – no response
Ms. Teresa Godoy, Pacific Mushroom Farm – no response

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Rescind WDRs Order No. 01-101, as proposed.

ATTACHMENTS

1. WDR Order No. 01-101
2. MRP No. 01-101

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