

**Department of Environmental Conservation
Response to Comments**

For

**Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science
dba The Alaska SeaLife Center
APDES Permit No. AK0052566**

Public Noticed March 6, 2020 – April 6, 2020

FINAL, April 13, 2020



**Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, AK 99501**

1 Introduction

1.1 Summary of Facility / Permit

The Alaska SeaLife Center (ASLC) and Steller South Beach Facility (SSBF) operate as a public aquarium and Alaska's only permanent marine mammal rehabilitation facility and are located in Seward, Alaska. The ASLC treats non-domestic wastewater from two large marine mammal habitats, one seabird habitat, indoor and outdoor research pools, rescue and rehabilitation tanks and pools, and numerous aquaria. The ASLC treats non-domestic wastewater through a treatment system with effluent filtration, ozone and ultraviolet disinfection and has a design rate of 8.1 million gallons per day. Untreated influent seawater enters the ASLC via two 24-inch intake pipes that extend 750 feet offshore into Resurrection Bay to a depth of 300 feet. A continuous flow of influent seawater is pumped into the habitat pools, aquaria, laboratory, and South Curatorial/South Beach facility through one of three influent water lines and is completely exchanged throughout the ASLC approximately nine times per day. Spent seawater drains from tanks and pools in the ASLC and SSBF through one of two wastewater streams to a common contaminant well, undergoes ozone treatment and discharges to Resurrection Bay, a marine waterbody, via Outfall 001A, a single port discharge unit. The Department has not authorized mixing zones for the ASLC. All water quality standards will be met at the point of discharge into Resurrection Bay.

1.2 Opportunities for Public Participation

The Department of Environmental Conservation proposed to reissue an Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) wastewater discharge permit to the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science (SAAMS) for the ASLC. To ensure public, agency, and tribal notification and opportunities for participation the Department:

- identified the permit on the annual Permit Issuance Plan posted online at: <https://dec.alaska.gov/water/wastewater/pip/>
- notified potentially affected tribes and local governments that the Department would be working on this permit via letter, fax and/or email on January 16, 2020.
- posted a preliminary draft of the permit on-line for a 10-day applicant review on February 20, 2020 and notified tribes, local governments, and other agencies
- formally posted public notice of the draft permit on March 6, 2020 on the Department's public notice web page
- sent email notifications via the APDES Program List Serve when the preliminary draft and draft permits were available for review

The Department did not receive any comments during the public notice period. The Department requested comments from the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Department contacted the permittee on April 8, 2020. The permittee waived the five-day proposed final applicant review in writing. The Department proceeded to issuance of the final permit consistent with 18 AAC 83.120(m).

1.3 Final Permit

The final permit was issued by the Department on April 13, 2020. There were no changes from the public noticed permit.