Department of Environmental Conservation
Response to Comments

For

Westward Seafoods, Inc. – Captains Bay Facility
APDES Permit No. AK0049786

Public Noticed
December 10, 2021 – January 12, 2022

January 27, 2022
1 Introduction

1.1 Summary of Facility / Permit
The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC or the Department) proposes to reissue an Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) individual permit to Westward Seafoods, Inc. – Captains Bay Facility for discharge of seafood processing waste and wastewater to waters of the U.S. The permit authorizes discharges to Captains Bay. The permit is the reissuance of AK0049786, previously issued on December 31, 2001.

In order to ensure protection of water quality and human health, the permit places limits on the types and amounts of pollutants that can be discharged from the facility, outlines best management practices (BMPs) to which the facility must adhere, and requires effluent and receiving water monitoring.

1.2 Opportunities for Public Participation
DEC proposed to reissue an APDES wastewater discharge individual permit, Westward Seafoods, Inc. – Captains Bay Facility. 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: http://dec.alaska.gov/water/wastewater.aspx
- notified potentially affected tribes and local governments that the Department would be working on this permit via letter, fax, and/or email on July 16, 2021
- posted a preliminary draft of the permit online for a 10-day applicant review October 28, 2021 and notified tribes, local government(s), and other agencies
- formally published public notice of the draft permit on December 10, 2021 in the Anchorage Daily News and on December 16, 2021 in the Dutch Harbor Fisherman and posted the public notice on the Department’s public notice web page
- posted the proposed final permit online for a 5-day applicant review on January 19, 2022
- sent email notifications via the APDES Program Listserv when the preliminary draft, draft, and proposed final permits were available for review

The Department received comments from one interested party on the draft permit and supporting documents. The Department requested comment from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Department did not receive comments from any government agencies.

This document summarizes the comments submitted and the justification for any action taken or not taken by DEC in response to the comments.
1.3 Final Permit
The final permit was adopted by the Department on January 27, 2022. There were no changes from the public noticed permit.

2 Project Area Zone of Deposit (Part 1.8)

2.1 Comment Summary
Comment was received requesting that the coverage threshold for required annual seafloor surveying (referenced in Part 1.8.3.5.2 and Table 6) be changed to 1.75 acres instead of 0.75 acres.

Response:
The Department determined it appropriate to change the coverage threshold for required annual seafloor surveying to 1.5 acres, as this is the threshold that formally constitutes “impairment” under the state’s listing methodology guidance document for determining water quality impairments from residues.

The incorporated revisions are specified as follows (additions are underlined).

1.8.3.5.2 The initial Part II Seafloor Survey shall be conducted during the second year of permit coverage, during the same time period as described in Part 1.8.3.5.1. The summed seafood processing waste coverage area applicable to the 2.0-acre limit, as defined in Part 1.8.2.1, determines the required subsequent seafloor survey frequency, which is as follows:

1.8.3.5.2.1 Every year, if the previous seafloor survey report finds greater than or equal to 0.75 1.5 acres seafood waste deposit coverage.

1.8.3.5.2.2 Every two years, if the previous seafloor survey report finds less than 0.75 1.5 acres seafood waste deposit coverage.

Table 6 in the permit, Table 12 in the Fact Sheet, and Table 1 in Appendix F were updated accordingly.