

ITEM: 22

SUBJECT: Horizon Nut, LLC and Global Ag Resources USA, LLC, Waste Discharge Requirements, Lost Hills Pistachio Processing Plant, Kern County

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of Waste Discharge Requirements*

BACKGROUND: Horizon Nut, LLC (Horizon) owns and operates a pistachio processing plant (Plant) near Lost Hills in Kern County. The Plant has been in operation since at least 1990 with various owners, never under WDRs. Horizon processes raw pistachios by mechanical removal of the hulls and washing with water. The Plant operates seven days a week for between 30 and 60 days, usually beginning in September. Total annual discharge is 130 million gallons. The monthly average discharge is 2.3 mgd and the maximum daily discharge is 4.6 mgd. Effluent from the Plant is temporarily stored in up to six unlined ponds then conveyed to up to four unlined irrigation reservoirs and is either mixed with surface water from the California Aqueduct or used undiluted to irrigate 1,460 acres of mature pistachios. Solid material (primarily pistachio shells) are removed from the wastewater ponds annually and incorporated into up to 400 acres of open land. The wastewater and solids application areas are owned by Global Ag Resources USA, LLC.

Groundwater in the vicinity of the Plant is saline and generally of poor quality, which is characteristic of the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. Groundwater is below the MCL for nitrates. The discharge is not expected to further degrade groundwater quality. Staff addressed written comments from Horizon Nut, LLC and Ms. Jo Anne Kipps with minor changes to the WDRs.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the WDRs.

mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review PEP

31 January/1 February 2013 Board Meeting
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