



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

PO Box 47775 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7775 • (360) 407-6300

November 28, 2016

Ms. Catherine Gockel
Office of Water & Watersheds
United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900, OWW-191
Seattle, Washington 98101

Dear Ms. Gockel:

Thank you for providing the Department of Ecology (Ecology) with the preliminary draft NPDES General Permit for Offshore Seafood Processors in Federal Waters off the coast of Washington and Oregon. Elizabeth Ruther from your office will be meeting with Terry Swanson on December 1, 2016, at 1:00 to discuss federal consistency, if this is a good day for you perhaps we could also discuss some questions from the Water Quality Program before we submit our comments during the public comment period. If this is not a convenient time, we can set up another appointment. Topics we would like to discuss with you are:

- Chapter 90.48.020 of the Revised Code of Washington requires the use of all known available and reasonable methods by industries and others to prevent and control the pollution of the waters of the state of Washington (AKART). Ecology is familiar with what constitutes AKART for shore based fish processors, how does it differ for an offshore processor ship?
- What restrictions do offshore processor ships have that would prevent them from applying AKART to their discharges that is identical to shore based fish processors?
- What is the processing capacity of the shore based fish processors in Washington and Oregon? Do shore based processing capacity limitations necessitate the use of offshore processor ships to accommodate the fishing fleet? Do the offshore processors make on shore processing unattractive to the fish catching fleet?
- Does fish meal production, and grind and pump discharge happen at the same time, or are they independent processes? If not independent can they be?
- Rather than a demonstration study, consider restricting offshore processor ships from discharging grind and pump waste inside the contiguous zone, but allow ships practicing AKART (meal production and stick water discharge from meal production) to operate between 3 and 24 miles offshore.
- Enforcement in Washington has been absent for the EPA's Vessel General Permit, how does EPA intend to enforce this general permit?



Ms. Catherine Gockel
November 28, 2016
Page 2

- How can EPA issue coverage to a discharger who does not submit a Notice of Intent? Is it not the basis for amount of seafood processing waste a vessel is permitted to discharge? The permit also states that if information is missing permit authorization will not be granted.
- Should the permit contain a provision requiring a study of the impact of water intake structures on aquatic life?
- Should Ecology receive copies of the Annual Reports?

Thank you for the opportunity to review the preliminary draft permit. I look forward to meeting with you at a convenient time to discuss these topics prior to the public comment period.

Sincerely,



Marc Pacifico
Senior Permit Compliance Specialist
Industrial Operations Unit
Southwest Regional Office
Water Quality Program

cc: Heather Bartlett, Ecology
Loree' Randall, Ecology
Terry Swanson, Ecology