

Settlement to Reduce Discharge of Seafood Waste

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(Seattle; Sept. 28, 2011) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) today announced that Trident Seafoods Corp., one of the world's largest seafood processors, has agreed to pay a \$2.5 million civil penalty and invest millions in seafood processing waste controls to settle alleged violations of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Unauthorized discharges of seafood processing waste lead to large seafood waste piles on the seafloor, creating anoxic, or oxygen-depleted, conditions that result in unsuitable habitats for fish and other living organisms.

"Today's settlement is truly a game changer," said Dennis McLerran, EPA Regional Administrator in Seattle. "Trident is definitely changing course and seriously investing in waste management and increased fish meal plant capacity. We share Trident's view that this settlement will be better for the environment as well as their bottom line. We're establishing a new 'best management practices' yardstick for Alaska's seafood-processing industry."

"This agreement will benefit the quality of Alaskan waters, which host a critical habitat for the seafood industry," said Ignacia S. Moreno, assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "The upgrades will enable Trident to achieve and maintain compliance with the Clean Water Act, and will protect Alaskan waters, eliminate waste and create efficiencies that will serve as a model of best business practices for the seafood processing industry."

The agreement requires Trident to invest an estimated \$30 to \$40 million, and potentially more, in source control and waste pile remediation measures. The source control measures include building a fishmeal plant in Naknek, Alaska, that will have the capacity to handle at least 30 million pounds of seafood processing waste annually, taking in both its own fish waste and potentially that of other local processors. Trident has also agreed to reduce the amount of seafood-processing waste discharged from the Akutan, Cordova, St. Paul and Ketchikan, Alaska, facilities, and monitor the amount of seafood-processing waste discharged into Starrigavan Bay in Sitka, Alaska. The actions taken will reduce Trident's fish-processing discharges by a total of more than 105 million pounds annually.

The company has also agreed to remediation measures including studying seafloor waste piles at Trident's facilities in Akutan, Ketchikan and Cordova. Based on the results of these studies, Trident will remove or partially remediate the piles. One seafood-processing waste pile in Akutan Harbor is currently estimated to be more than 50 acres in size.

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The EPA complaint, also filed as part of this legal action, alleges that Trident had more than 480 CWA violations at 14 of its on-shore and off-shore Alaskan seafood-processing facilities. The alleged violations include discharging without a necessary permit, exceeding discharge limits, failing to comply with permit restrictions on discharge locations (including discharges into at least two National Wildlife Refuges), creating oxygen-depleting 'zones of deposit' or underwater piles of fish-processing waste occupying more than the allowed one acre of seafloor. The company also allegedly failed to conduct required monitoring and implement required best management practices.

Over the past decade, Trident has been a party to multiple administrative enforcement agreements and judicial consent decrees resolving similar violations at many of the same facilities.

The settlement was lodged in federal court in Seattle, Wash. and is subject to a 30-day public comment period.

For more information on the settlement and a copy of the consent decree, please visit <http://epa.gov/compliance/resources/cases/civil/cwa/tridentseafoods.html> [1]

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