



Fact Sheet

Proposed Effluent Guidelines for Aquatic Animal Production

Summary

The Agency is proposing wastewater discharge regulations for the Concentrated Aquatic Animal Production Industry. EPA is proposing these regulations, called effluent guidelines, to control the discharge of Total Suspended Solids and also to limit the release of drugs, chemicals, pathogens and non-native species. The proposed regulations are open for public comment.

Background on Effluent Guidelines

Effluent guidelines are national regulations that establish restrictions on the discharge of pollutants to surface waters or to publicly owned treatment works by specific categories of industries. EPA issues effluent guidelines for categories of existing sources and new sources under Title III of the Clean Water Act. The requirements are based on the performance of treatment and control technologies; they are not based on risk or impact on receiving waters. Effluent guidelines are implemented through permits as part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

Proposed Requirements for Concentrated Aquatic Animal Production

The proposed effluent guidelines address concerns about:

- the recent rapid growth of this industry;
- the use and potential for discharge of drugs and chemicals;
- the possible release of non-native species or pathogens that might harm wild fish populations.

Discharge standards will also reduce discharges of nutrients, Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS), which have been cited as leading causes of water quality impairment.

The proposed regulations apply to facilities producing at least 100,000 pounds annually in any of the following production systems: recirculating, flow through, or net pens. For the first two systems, EPA proposes TSS limitations based on solids control. For net pens, which are located

in open waters, EPA proposes feed monitoring. For all facilities, EPA proposes best management practices to control the discharge of drugs, chemicals, non-native species, and pathogens.

Costs and Benefits

EPA estimates that implementing this regulation will remove 4.1 million pounds of TSS that is now discharged to waters of the U.S. Controlling the discharge of TSS will also reduce the discharge of BOD and nutrients by about 8.7 million pounds a year. EPA expects these reductions to improve the water quality of streams near the facilities, allowing for more recreational use of those waters. EPA estimates that the annual benefits of the proposal will be between \$22,000 and \$113,000. EPA estimates annual compliance costs to the industry of \$1.5 million. The proposed requirements will affect 222 facilities.

How to Get Additional Information

You can get the technical development, economic and environmental analysis support and guidance documents that support this proposal from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications, P.O. Box 42419, Cincinnati, OH 45242-2419, (800) 490-9198 or from EPA's Water Resource Center. You can also find these documents and the proposed regulation on EPA's web site: www.epa.gov/guide/aquaculture. The entire record is available for inspection in the EPA Water Docket in Room B135 of EPA West Building, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460, (202) 566-2426.

EPA will hold public meetings to discuss and answer questions about this proposal. We will announce the location and dates for these meetings in a later Federal Register notice and on the web site. The public meetings will be held across the country during the public comment period to accommodate aquatic animal producers and others who may wish to attend.