

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98101

AUTHORIZATION TO DISCHARGE UNDER THE
NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)

In compliance with the provisions of the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq., as amended by the Water Quality Act of 1987, P.L. 100-4, the "Act",

Concha Holdings, Ltd.

is authorized to discharge from a suction dredge (the "facility") to the receiving waters of Norton Sound, in accordance with the effluent limitations, monitoring requirements and other conditions set forth herein.

The permittee shall reapply (Permit Part V.B.) for a permit reissuance at least 180 days before the expiration date of this permit if the permittee intends to continue operations and discharges at the facility beyond the term of this permit.

The permit shall become effective August 1, 2005.

This permit and the authorization to discharge shall expire July 31, 2010.

Signed this 24th day of June 2005.

/s/ Michael F. Gearheard
Director
Office of Water & Watersheds, Region 10
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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I. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

A. Effluent Limitations

During the period beginning on the effective date of this permit and lasting through the expiration date, the permittee is authorized to discharge from the facility according to the terms and conditions of this permit.

1. At all points in the receiving water measured 500 meters radially beyond the dredge's discharge point, the maximum allowable increase in turbidity is 25 nephelometric turbidity units (NTUs).
2. A visual increase in turbidity (any additional cloudiness or muddiness) outside of a 500 meter radius of the suction dredge during operations is considered a violation of this permit.
3. If noticeable turbidity does occur outside the 500 meter radius of the work site, operation of the suction dredge must decrease or cease so that a violation as defined above does not exist.

B. Monitoring Requirements

1. The operator shall visually monitor for turbidity as described in Permit Part I.A. once per day of operation. Operators shall record daily all turbidity monitoring results. *The Permittee shall maintain records of all information resulting from any visual inspections.*
2. The Permittee will report the period of suction dredging in the annual report. Visual violation occurrences will also be reported along with the measures taken to comply with the provisions of Permit Part I.A.3.

II. MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- A. Dredging, which results in undercutting, littoral channeling, or otherwise results in beach erosion, is prohibited.
- B. Motorized winches or other motorized equipment shall not be used to move boulders, logs, or other natural obstructions.
- C. Suction dredges shall not operate within 650 meters of another dredging operation occurring simultaneously.
- D. Dredging of concentrated silt and clay is prohibited.
- E. Care shall be taken by the operator during refueling of the dredge to prevent spillage into surface waters or to groundwater. Any spills shall be cleaned up

using materials such as sorbent pads and booms. All spills shall be reported to DEC by calling 1-800-478-9300.

III. MONITORING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. Representative Sampling (Routine and Non-Routine Discharges).

1. Samples and measurements taken for monitoring purposes must be representative of the monitored activity.
2. In order to ensure that the effluent limitations set forth in this permit are not violated at times other than when routine samples are taken, the permittee must conduct additional sampling at the appropriate outfall whenever any discharge occurs that may reasonably be expected to cause or contribute to a violation that is unlikely to be detected by a routine sample.
3. The permittee must samples as soon as any spill, discharge or bypassed effluent reaches the outfall.

B. Reporting of Monitoring Results. Monitoring results shall be summarized for each month and compiled into a report. The annual report shall be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10, 1200 Sixth Avenue, NPDES Compliance Unit OCE-133, Seattle, Washington 98101-3188, no later than November 30 of each year.

If there is no mining activity during the year, the Permittee shall notify EPA of these facts no later than November 30 of each year.

The annual report shall also be sent to:

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
610 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

C. Monitoring Procedures. Monitoring must be conducted according to test procedures approved under 40 CFR 136, unless other test procedures have been specified in this permit.

D. Additional Monitoring by Permittee. If the permittee monitors any pollutant more frequently than required by this permit, using test procedures approved under 40 CFR 136 or, in the case of sludge use or disposal, approved under 40 CFR 136 unless otherwise specified in 40 CFR 503, or as specified in this permit, the permittee must include the results of this monitoring in the calculation and reporting of the data submitted in the annual report or sludge reporting form specified by the Director. Upon request by the Director, the

permittee must submit results of any other sampling, regardless of the test method used.

E. Records Contents. Records of monitoring information must include:

1. the date, exact place, and time of sampling or measurements;
2. the name(s) of the individual(s) who performed the sampling or measurements;
3. the date(s) analyses were performed;
4. the names of the individual(s) who performed the analyses;
5. the analytical techniques or methods used; and
6. the results of such analyses.

F. Retention of Records. The permittee must retain records of all other monitoring information, including, all calibration and maintenance records and all original strip chart recordings for continuous monitoring instrumentation, copies of all reports required by this permit, copies of annual reports, a copy of this NPDES permit, and records of all data used to complete the application for this permit, for a period of at least five years from the date of the sample, measurement, report or application. This period may be extended by request of the Director or ADEC at any time.

G. Twenty-four Hour Notice of Noncompliance Reporting

1. The permittee must report the following occurrences of noncompliance by telephone within 24 hours from the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances:
 - a. any noncompliance that may endanger health or the environment;
 - b. any unanticipated bypass that exceeds any effluent limitation in the permit (See Part IV.F, "Bypass of Treatment Facilities");
 - c. any upset that exceeds any effluent limitation in the permit (See Permit Part IV.G., "Upset Conditions");
 - d. any violation of a maximum daily discharge limitation for any of the pollutants in Permit Part I.A. requiring 24-hour reporting.
2. The permittee must also provide a written submission within five days of the time that the permittee becomes aware of any event required to be

reported under Permit Part III.G.1., above. The written submission must contain:

- a. a description of the noncompliance and its cause;
 - b. the period of noncompliance, including exact dates and times;
 - c. the estimated time noncompliance is expected to continue if it has not been corrected;
 - d. steps taken or planned to reduce, eliminate, and prevent recurrence of the noncompliance.
3. The Director may waive the written report on a case-by-case basis if the oral report has been received within 24 hours by the NPDES Compliance Hotline in Seattle, Washington, by telephone, (206) 553-1846.
 4. Reports must be submitted to the addresses in Part III.B. ("Reporting of Monitoring Results").

H. Other Noncompliance Reporting. The permittee must report all instances of noncompliance not required to be reported within 24 hours, at the time that monitoring reports for Part III.B. ("Reporting of Monitoring Results") are submitted. The reports must contain the information listed in Part III.G. ("Twenty-four Hour Notice of Noncompliance Reporting") of this permit.

I. Changes in Discharge of Toxic Substances. The permittee must notify the Director and ADEC as soon as it knows, or has reason to believe:

1. That any activity has occurred or will occur that would result in the discharge, on a routine or frequent basis, of any toxic pollutant that is not limited in the permit, if that discharge will exceed the highest of the following "notification levels":
 - a. One hundred micrograms per liter (100 µg/l);
 - b. Two hundred micrograms per liter (200 µg/l) for acrolein and acrylonitrile; five hundred micrograms per liter (500 µg/l) for 2,4-dinitrophenol and for 2-methyl-4, 6-dinitrophenol; and one milligram per liter (1 mg/l) for antimony;
 - c. Five (5) times the maximum concentration value reported for that pollutant in the permit application in accordance with 40 CFR 122.21(g)(7); or
 - d. The level established by the Director in accordance with 40 CF 122.44(f).

2. That any activity has occurred or will occur that would result in any discharge, on a non-routine or infrequent basis, of any toxic pollutant that is not limited in the permit, if that discharge may reasonably be expected to exceed the highest of the following “notification levels”:
 - a. Five hundred micrograms per liter (500 µg/l);
 - b. One milligram per liter (1 mg/l) for antimony;
 - c. Ten (10) times the maximum concentration value reported for that pollutant in the permit application in accordance with 40 CFR 122.21(g)(7); or
 - d. The level established by the Director in accordance with 40 CFR 122.44(f).

J. Compliance Schedule Reporting. Reports of compliance or noncompliance with, or any progress reports on, interim and final requirements contained in any compliance schedule of this permit must be submitted no later than 14 days following each schedule date.

IV. COMPLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Duty to Comply. The permittee must comply with all conditions of this permit. Any permit noncompliance constitutes a violation of the Act and is grounds for enforcement action; for permit termination, revocation and reissuance, or modification; for denial of a permit renewal application.

B. Penalties for Violations of Permit Conditions

1. **Civil and Administrative Penalties.** Pursuant to 40 CFR Part 19 and the Act, any person who violates section 301, 302, 306, 307, 308, 318 or 405 of the Act, or any permit condition or limitation implementing any such sections in a permit issued under section 402, or any requirement imposed in a pretreatment program approved under sections 402(a)(3) or 402(b)(8) of the Act, is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed the maximum amounts authorized by Section 309(d) of the Act and the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act (28 U.S.C. § 2461 note) as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act (31 U.S.C. § 3701 note) (currently \$32,500 per day for each violation).
2. **Criminal Penalties.**
 - a. **Negligent Violations.** The Act provides that any person who negligently violates sections 301, 302, 306, 307, 308, 318, or 405 of the Act, or any condition or limitation implementing any of such section in a permit issued under section 402 of the Act, or any requirement imposed in a pretreatment program approved under section 402(a)(3) or 402(b)(8) of the Act, is subject to criminal

penalties of \$2,500 to \$25,000 per day of violation, or imprisonment of not more than 1 year, or both. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction for a negligent violation, a person shall be subject to criminal penalties of not more than \$50,000 per day of violation, or by imprisonment of not more than 2 years, or both.

- b. **Knowing Violations.** Any person who knowingly violates such sections, or such conditions or limitations is subject to criminal penalties of \$5,000 to \$50,000 per day of violation, or imprisonment for not more than 3 years, or both. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction for a knowing violation, a person shall be subject to criminal penalties of not more than \$100,000 per day of violation, or imprisonment of not more than 6 years, or both.
- c. **Knowing Endangerment.** Any person who knowingly violates section 301, 302, 303, 306, 307, 308, 318 or 405 of the Act, or any permit condition or limitation implementing any of such sections in a permit issued under section 402 of the Act, and who knows at that time that he thereby places another person in imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury, shall, upon conviction, be subject to a fine of not more than \$250,000 or imprisonment of not more than 15 years, or both. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction for a knowing endangerment violation, a person shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$500,000 or by imprisonment of not more than 30 years, or both. An organization, as defined in section 309(c)(3)(B)(iii) of the Act, shall, upon conviction of violating the imminent danger provision, be subject to a fine of not more than \$100,000,000 and can be fined up to \$2,000,000 for a second or subsequent convictions.
- d. **False Statements.** The Act provides that any person who falsifies, tampers with, or knowingly renders inaccurate any monitoring device or method required to be maintained under this permit shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by imprisonment for not more than 2 years, or both. If a conviction of a person is for a violation committed after a first conviction of such person under this Part, punishment is a fine of not more than \$20,000 per day of violation, or by imprisonment of not more than 4 years, or both. The Act further provides that any person who knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or certification in any record or other document submitted or required to be maintained under this permit, including monitoring reports or reports of compliance or noncompliance shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of

not more than \$10,000 per violation, or by imprisonment for not more than 6 months per violation, or by both.

- C. Need to Halt or Reduce Activity not a Defense.** It shall not be a defense for the permittee in an enforcement action that it would have been necessary to halt or reduce the permitted activity in order to maintain compliance with this permit.
- D. Duty to Mitigate.** The permittee must take all reasonable steps to minimize or prevent any discharge or sludge use or disposal in violation of this permit that has a reasonable likelihood of adversely affecting human health or the environment.
- E. Proper Operation and Maintenance.** The permittee must at all times properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control (and related appurtenances) which are installed or used by the permittee to achieve compliance with the conditions of this permit. Proper operation and maintenance also includes adequate laboratory controls and appropriate quality assurance procedures. This provision requires the operation of back-up or auxiliary facilities or similar systems which are installed by the permittee only when the operation is necessary to achieve compliance with the conditions of the permit.
- F. Bypass of Treatment Facilities**
1. Bypass not exceeding limitations. The permittee may allow any bypass to occur that does not cause effluent limitations to be exceeded, but only if it also is for essential maintenance to assure efficient operation. These bypasses are not subject to the provisions of Parts IV.F.2 and IV.F.3.
 2. Notice.
 - a. Anticipated bypass. If the permittee knows in advance of the need for a bypass, it must submit prior notice to the Director and ADEC, if possible at least 10 days before the date of bypass.
 - b. Unanticipated bypass. The permittee must submit notice of an unanticipated bypass as required under Permit Part III.G. ("Twenty-four Hour Notice of Noncompliance Reporting").
 3. Prohibition of bypass.
 - a. Bypass is prohibited, and the Director or ADEC may take enforcement action against the permittee for a bypass, unless:

- (1) The bypass was unavoidable to prevent loss of life, personal injury, or severe property damage;
 - (2) There were no feasible alternatives to the bypass, such as the use of auxiliary treatment facilities, retention of untreated wastes, or maintenance during normal periods of equipment downtime. This condition is not satisfied if adequate back-up equipment should have been installed in the exercise of reasonable engineering judgment to prevent a bypass that occurred during normal periods of equipment downtime or preventive maintenance; and
 - (3) The permittee submitted notices as required under IV.F.3.a(2).
- b. The Director and ADEC may approve an anticipated bypass, after considering its adverse effects, if the Director and ADEC determine that it will meet the three conditions listed above in Part IV.F.3.a.

G. Upset Conditions

1. Effect of an upset. An upset constitutes an affirmative defense to an action brought for noncompliance with such technology-based permit effluent limitations if the permittee meets the requirements of Part IV.G.2. No determination made during administrative review of claims that noncompliance was caused by upset, and before an action for noncompliance, is final administrative action subject to judicial review.
2. Conditions necessary for a demonstration of upset. To establish the affirmative defense of upset, the permittee must demonstrate, through properly signed, contemporaneous operating logs, or other relevant evidence that:
 - a. An upset occurred and that the permittee can identify the causes(s) of the upset;
 - b. The permitted facility was at the time being properly operated;
 - c. The permittee submitted notice of the upset as required under Part III.G. ("Twenty-four Hour Notice of Noncompliance Reporting"); and
 - d. The permittee complied with any remedial measures required under Part IV.D ("Duty to Mitigate").

3. Burden of proof. In any enforcement proceeding, the permittee seeking to establish the occurrence of an upset has the burden of proof.
- H. Toxic Pollutants.** The permittee must comply with effluent standards or prohibitions established under section 307(a) of the Act for toxic pollutants within the time provided in the regulations that established those standards or prohibitions, even if the permit has not yet been modified to incorporate the requirement.
- I. Planned Changes.** The permittee must give notice to the Director and ADEC as soon as possible of any planned physical alterations or additions to the permitted facility whenever:
1. The alteration or addition to a permitted facility may meet one of the criteria for determining whether a facility is a new source as determined in 40 CFR 122.29(b); or
 2. The alteration or addition could significantly change the nature or increase the quantity of pollutants discharged. This notification applies to pollutants that are not subject to effluent limitations in this permit.
- J. Anticipated Noncompliance.** The permittee must give advance notice to the Director and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) of any planned changes in the permitted facility or activity that may result in noncompliance with this permit.

V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. Permit Actions.** This permit may be modified, revoked and reissued, or terminated for cause as specified in 40 CFR 122.62, 122.64, or 124.5. The filing of a request by the permittee for a permit modification, revocation and reissuance, termination, or a notification of planned changes or anticipated noncompliance, does not stay any permit condition.
- B. Duty to Reapply.** If the permittee intends to continue an activity regulated by this permit after the expiration date of this permit, the permittee must apply for and obtain a new permit. In accordance with 40 CFR 122.21(d), and unless permission for the application to be submitted at a later date has been granted by the Director, the permittee must submit a new application at least 180 days before the expiration date of this permit.
- C. Duty to Provide Information.** The permittee must furnish to the Director and ADEC, within any reasonable time specified in the request, any information that the Director or ADEC may request to determine whether cause exists for modifying, revoking and reissuing, or terminating this

permit, or to determine compliance with this permit. The permittee must also furnish to the Director or ADEC, upon request, copies of records required to be kept by this permit.

D. Other Information. When the permittee becomes aware that it failed to submit any relevant facts in a permit application, or that it submitted incorrect information in a permit application or in any report to the Director or ADEC, it must promptly submit such facts or information.

E. Signatory Requirements. All application, reports or information submitted to the Director and ADEC must be signed and certified as follows:

1. All permit applications must be signed as follows:
 - a. For a corporation: by a responsible corporate officer.
 - b. For a partnership or sole proprietorship: by a general partner or the proprietor, respectively.
 - c. For a municipality, state, federal, or other public agency: by either a principal executive officer or ranking elected official.
2. All reports required by the permit and other information requested by the Director or ADEC must be signed by a person described above or by a duly authorized representative of that person. A person is a duly authorized representative only if:
 - a. The authorization is made in writing by a person described above;
 - b. The authorization specifies either an individual or a position having responsibility for the overall operation of the regulated facility or activity, such as the position of plant manager, operator of a well or a well field, superintendent, position of equivalent responsibility, or an individual or position having overall responsibility for environmental matters for the company; and
 - c. The written authorization is submitted to the Director and ADEC.
3. Changes to authorization. If an authorization under Part V.E.2 is no longer accurate because a different individual or position has responsibility for the overall operation of the facility, a new authorization satisfying the requirements of Part V.E.2 must be submitted to the Director and ADEC prior to or together with any reports, information, or applications to be signed by an authorized representative.

4. Certification. Any person signing a document under this Part must make the following certification:

“I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations.”

- F. Availability of Reports.** In accordance with 40 CFR 2, information submitted to EPA pursuant to this permit may be claimed as confidential by the permittee. In accordance with the Act, permit applications, permits and effluent data are not considered confidential. Any confidentiality claim must be asserted at the time of submission by stamping the words “confidential business information” on each page containing such information. If no claim is made at the time of submission, EPA may make the information available to the public without further notice to the permittee. If a claim is asserted, the information will be treated in accordance with the procedures in 40 CFR 2, Subpart B (Public Information) and 41 Fed. Reg. 36902 through 36924 (September 1, 1975), as amended.
- G. Inspection and Entry.** The permittee must allow the Director, ADEC, or an authorized representative (including an authorized contractor acting as a representative of the Administrator), upon the presentation of credentials and other documents as may be required by law, to:
 1. Enter upon the permittee’s premises where a regulated facility or activity is located or conducted, or where records must be kept under the conditions of this permit;
 2. Have access to and copy, at reasonable times, any records that must be kept under the conditions of this permit;
 3. Inspect at reasonable times any facilities, equipment (including monitoring and control equipment), practices, or operations regulated or required under this permit; and
 4. Sample or monitor at reasonable times, for the purpose of assuring permit compliance or as otherwise authorized by the Act, any substances or parameters at any location.

- H. **Property Rights.** The issuance of this permit does not convey any property rights of any sort, or any exclusive privileges, nor does it authorize any injury to persons or property or invasion of other private rights, nor any infringement of state or local laws or regulations.
- I. **Transfers.** This permit is not transferable to any person except after notice to the Director. The Director may require modification or revocation and reissuance of the permit to change the name of the permittee and incorporate such other requirements as may be necessary under the Act. (See 40 CFR 122.61; in some cases, modification or revocation and reissuance is mandatory.)
- J. **State Laws.** Nothing in this permit shall be construed to preclude the institution of any legal action or relieve the permittee from any responsibilities, liabilities, or penalties established pursuant to any applicable state law or regulation under authority preserved by section 510 of the Act.

VI. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Bypass" means the intentional diversion of waste streams around any portion of a treatment facility.
- B. "Expanding Facility" means any facility increasing in size such as to affect the discharge but operating within the permit area covered by its general permit.
- C. "Mining Season" means the time between the start of mining in a calendar year and when mining has ceased for that same calendar year.
- D. "Receiving Water" means waters such as oceans, sounds, lakes, rivers or any other surface waters which receive wastewater discharges.
- E. "Severe property damage" means substantial physical damage to property, damage to the treatment facilities which causes them to become inoperable, or substantial and permanent loss of natural resources which can reasonably be expected to occur in the absence of a bypass. Severe property damage does not mean economic loss caused by delays in production.
- F. "Silt and Clay" are soil particles having a diameter of less than 0.002 mm (2 microns).
- G. "Upset" means an exceptional incident in which there is unintentional and temporary noncompliance with technology-based permit effluent limitations because of factors beyond the reasonable control of the Permittee. An upset does not include noncompliance to the extent caused by operational error, improperly designed treatment facilities, inadequate treatment facilities, lack of preventive maintenance, or careless or improper operation.