

Nordic Aquafarms California, LLC
Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit
Record Number: PLN-2020-16698
Assessor's Parcel Number: (APN): 401-112-021

Recommended Planning Commission Action:

1. Open discussion for Planning Commissioners to deliberate action on the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Project and discuss the Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit applied for; and
2. Ask questions to staff, the applicant, and the property owner as needed; and
3. Close the public hearing and adopt the resolutions to take the following actions:
 - (a) *Certify the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Nordic Aquafarms California, LLC, the project has been prepared in compliance with CEQA pursuant to Section 15090 or 15092 of the State CEQA Guidelines; and*
 - (b) *Make all required findings for approval of the Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit; and*
 - (c) *Approve the Nordic Aquafarms California, LLC, Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit subject to the recommended conditions.*

Executive Summary: Nordic Aquafarms California, LLC (NAFC), seeks a Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit to allow demolition and remediation of the existing Pulp Mill site, and construction of a land-based finfish recirculating aquaculture system (RAS) facility consisting of five buildings totaling 766,530 square feet. The facility will include installation of 4.8 megawatt (MW) solar array mounted on building rooftops, covering approximately 657,000 square feet. The subject site is a 76 -acre parcel located in the Samoa area, on both sides of Vance Avenue, approximately 2,000 feet north from the intersection of Vance Avenue and Bay Street, on the property known as 364 Vance Avenue. The proposed project is on the east side of Vance Avenue within a 36-acre lease area. The EIR has been prepared to address the entire project from construction to operation, considering the water intake and effluent from the facility. Nordic Aquafarms California, LLC (NAFC) is the applicant for the Terrestrial Development and Ocean Outfall components, and the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District (Harbor District) is the applicant and responsible party for the Humboldt Bay Water Intakes. The facility is estimated to employ around 90-100 employees for Phase 1, and up to 150 for full Phase 2 buildout and operation. The facility will operate 24 hours per day and seven days per week, with regular operation occurring Monday-Saturday. Employees will work in two shifts, one early morning and one late afternoon. It is estimated that the morning shift will consist of about 60 employees in Phase 1, increasing to approximately 90 in Phase 2. The evening shift will have roughly 30 employees in Phase 1, increasing to approximately 60 in Phase 2. Aside from shift arrival and departure, on-site traffic will be limited to personnel movement, deliveries, and outgoing shipments of products and coproducts. Fish movement within the site will be handled by subgrade piping and thus will not add to surface traffic.

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission Certify the EIR and Approve the Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit for this project.

July 28, 2022; Planning Commission Meeting:

During the July 28th Public hearing, the Planning Commission received presentations from Humboldt County Planning and Building Staff, the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District, and the applicant (NAFC). Public comment proceeded the presentations and was closed after all speakers had an opportunity to speak. Fifty-nine (59) comments were received during this duration. The Planning Commission unanimously voted to continue the discussion and decision on the proposed project/EIR certification to the following hearing on August 8, 2022.

August 4, 2022, Planning Commission Action/Recommendation:

The Planning Commission has been provided with revised Conditions of Approval. Changes include the edit or inclusion of three (3) Conditions of Approval. These additions are as follows:

17. Prior to any construction activities an engineer's report shall be submitted to the Building Inspection Division certifying that the abatement and demolition activity has been completed in accordance with the issued Demolition Permit and other applicable permits.

19. Prior to Phase 1 Occupancy, the Applicant shall prepare and receive approval from the Planning and Building Department of a Transportation Management Plan designed to reduce the number of single-occupant commute vehicles traveling to the site each day. The plan shall provide measures to reduce the number of single occupant employee vehicles traveling to the site. The Transportation Management Plan may utilize various mechanisms to achieve this including but not limited to:
 - a. Encourage ride-sharing and carpooling vanpooling. The operator of the facility should design and implement carpooling and ride-sharing incentive program for employees. For this to be considered effective, there must be incentives provided.
 - b. Encourage employees to remain on-site during meal breaks by providing a break room with kitchen, catering options, or cafeteria.
 - c. Work with the local transit authority to extend bus service to the site. The current bus transit stop is approximately 2-miles away. Installation of a transit stop in proximity to the project can be used to satisfy the condition.
 - d. Install shower facilities and places for employees to dress for those who commute via bicycle.

21. The applicant shall conduct the following monitoring activities as described in section 2.3.2 of the DEIR.
 - a. Baseline monitoring prior to operation of the outfall. This monitoring shall commence once Phase 1 demolition is initiated.
 - b. Post-discharge receiving water monitoring shall commence at discharge from Phase 1 and continue for three years following completion of Phase 2 operations (full facility discharge) following the same methodology as the baseline monitoring. The post-discharge monitoring would provide "before-after-control-impact" or "before-after-gradient" design for the biological monitoring program