

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. C69 was approved as Minute Item No. 69 by the California State Lands Commission by a vote of 2 to 0 at its 5-9-96 meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

C69

A 34

05/09/96

S 15

W24777

PRC7633

S. Sekelsky

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT
TO GENERAL PERMIT - PUBLIC AGENCY USE
FOR THE DUST MITIGATION PROGRAM ON OWENS DRY LAKE**

APPLICANT:

Great Basin Unified Air Pollution
Control District (GBUAPCD)
157 Short Street, Suite 6
Bishop, California 93514

AREA, TYPE LAND AND LOCATION:

Approximately 13,960 acres of State-owned sovereign lands in the bed of Owens Lake, Inyo County.

LAND USE:

Mitigation and dust abatement projects to limit particulate pollution from the dry bed of Owens Lake.

CONSIDERATION:

The Public Health and Safety; with the State reserving the right at any time to set a monetary rental if the Commission finds such action to be in the State's best interest.

BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Pursuant to 2 Cal. Code Regs. 2003

APPLICANT STATUS:

Applicant has jurisdiction over the implementation of emission limitations, rules and regulations, and enforcement procedures to maintain state and federal ambient air quality standards in the Owens Valley Basin.

PREREQUISITE CONDITIONS, FEES AND EXPENSES:

Filing fee has been paid.

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STATUTORY AND OTHER REFERENCES:

- A. PRC: Div. 6, Parts 1 and 2; Div. 13.
- B. Cal. Regs.: Title 3, Div. 3; Title 14, Div. 6.

AB 884:

N/A

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. At its May 5, 1992, meeting, the State Lands Commission ("SLC") approved Calendar Item Number 57 which approved a General Permit - Public Agency Use and a Memorandum of Agreement ("MOU") with the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control Board ("GBUAPCB") for experimental dust mitigation programs on Owens Dry Lake.
2. The Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District is now interested in experimenting with a salt-tolerant species of pickleweed (*Salicornia bigelovii*) on the bed of Owens Lake as a potential means of dust control. The plant is a hardy annual that grows in extremely saline conditions and that has been bred and cultivated elsewhere for economic return from oilseed and as a gourmet vegetable.

The District proposes to cooperate with Halophyte Enterprises Inc. (HEI) to evaluate the usefulness of this plant in dust control on Owens Lake, and also to analyze the commercial viability of this species for vegetable production.

The project, proposed for the current growing season, consists of small planting trials, and will take place in 2 locations on the Owens Lake playa. A map shows the study sites. (On file in the offices of the Commission)

Site 1 is on sandy soils near the Owens River delta. The site is associated with a very successful saltgrass test plot, and will be watered, as was the saltgrass plot, from the pipeline carrying water from the river wells to the north flood project. There are 12 plots at this site measuring 12 ft. X 12 ft. each. The sites will be planted on 3 different dates to determine the optimum timing for planting in this locale. They will be fertilized with a nitrogen and a phosphorous amendment. All plots are bermed, so water used for irrigation will be confined within the plot. Plants will be allowed to grow to maturity and will remain in the ground after the growing season is over to determine their value as a roughness element to control dust. HEI will also evaluate the quality of the green tips for commercial use. All the plots will be surrounded

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with shade cloth to prevent access by birds or other animals.

Site 2 is on clay soils at the site of existing vegetation test plots associated with the previously approved South Flood project. The test plot for pickleweed measures 50 ft. X 150 ft., and will be subdivided into several smaller plots to test for different soil preparations and planting dates. Fertilizer treatments will be as at Site 1; these plots too will be bermed to confine the irrigation water. The plots will also be confined with shade cloth, but this site is extremely far removed from the lake margin and is quite isolated.

The staff of the GBUAPCD and the SLC do not believe that this species of pickleweed has any potential to survive in surrounding wetlands as it is not cold-adapted. The District, however, will conduct an experiment. They will prepare a site at one of their wetland study locations that will be cleared of vegetation and provided with an enclosure. Pickleweed seed will be broadcast onto the plot and lightly buried. Germination and survivorship will be assessed during the growing season, and any plants reaching reproductive maturity will be removed. Examination of the plot will continue into 1997 to ensure that no seeds germinated after the intervening winter. If the species readily colonizes this wetland site, it can be considered a potentially invasive species.

GBUAPCD and SLC staff believe that these studies will provide sufficient data to determine if this species merits further study as a plant useful for dust mitigation, and if it has potential as a commercial crop. The proposed study will also determine whether the species has invasive potential, although the threat of the escape of this species under the current research plan is considered insignificant.

3. The SLC, at its May 5, 1992, meeting determined that the experimental program, as analyzed in EIR ND 587, State Clearinghouse #92032104 will not have a significant effect on the environment. Staff believes that the proposed amendments to the program are consistent with and appropriate to this previous determination.

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IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. FIND THAT ND 587 WAS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION ON MAY 5, 1992, FOR AN EXPERIMENTAL DUST MITIGATION PROGRAM AT OWENS DRY LAKE; THAT IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE PROGRAM WOULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT; AND THAT THE INFORMATION IN SUCH DOCUMENT AND THE COMMISSION'S FINDING ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY.

2. AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, OR HIS DESIGNEE, TO EXECUTE AN AMENDED GENERAL PERMIT-PUBLIC AGENCY USE, PRC 7633, BETWEEN THE STATE LANDS COMMISSION, AND GREAT BASIN UNIFIED AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD.

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