



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST
937 NO. HARBOR DR.
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92132**

**IN REPLY REFER TO:
5090
Ser N40JRR.mh/033
December 17, 2015**

Mr. David Smith
Manager, NPDES Permits Section (WTR-2-3)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Smith:

On behalf of Navy Region Southwest, thank you for the opportunity to participate and provide input to the Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the Rose Canyon Sustainable Aquaculture Project proposed by Rose Canyon Fisheries (RCF) Inc. The Navy has been involved with the early planning phases of this project with RCF and Hubbs/SeaWorld and appreciates the early coordination that has already occurred. During initial planning with RCF/Hubbs/SeaWorld, the Navy expressed serious concerns about siting of the proposed facility in areas used by the Navy for operations and testing.

After conducting a thorough review of operations throughout this area, we request that the facility be shifted north between latitudes 32°46.5'N and 32°47.0'N, east of longitude 117°21.0' W, as shown in attachment 1. This location, while still in a Navy Testing area, significantly reduces the potential for negative impacts to military operations and testing. However, this alternative site still carries the risk of accidental damage if Navy equipment or debris drifts into the proposed fish cages. Any permit issued should include language to eliminate any liability to the Navy if such accidental damage were to occur. This evaluation is specific to this proposed action and any future expansions or other aquaculture projects in this area would require additional review by the Navy.

The U.S. Navy welcomes the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process and can continue to offer consultation and review in developing the Environmental Assessment for the RCF/Hubbs/SeaWorld Aquaculture Facility in regards to potential impacts to Navy activities. Please keep us advised to how we may participate in working meetings to assist you in this regard. Our point of contact for this effort will be Walt Wilson, NRSW Marine Biologist. He can be reached at 619-532-2747 or by email at: walter.l.wilson2@navy.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. L. Stathos".

C. L. STATHOS
By direction

Attachment:
(1) Navy Area Usage Map of 17 Dec 2015

