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## Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

20 August 2020

Ron Kerr  
Bell-Carter Olive Company, Inc.  
1012 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Corning, CA 96021

**CERTIFIED MAIL:  
7019 0700 0002 1109 5086**

**OFFER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EXPEDITED PAYMENT LETTER PROGRAM  
RELATING TO ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY R5-2020-0551 FOR  
ASSESSMENT OF MANDATORY MINIMUM PENALTIES, BELL-CARTER OLIVE  
COMPANY, INC., BELL-CARTER INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT  
PLANT, TEHAMA COUNTY**

The Bell-Carter Olive Company, Inc. (Discharger) discharges treated wastewater from the Bell-Carter Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (Facility), which is regulated by Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Order R5-2015-0030 (NPDES CA0083721). This Offer to Participate in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Expedited Payment Letter Program (Conditional Offer) provides the Discharger with an opportunity to resolve mandatory minimum penalties for alleged NPDES permit violations without a formal administrative civil liability complaint.

The alleged mandatory minimum penalty, in the amount of **nine thousand dollars (\$9,000)**, represents the sum of accrued mandatory minimum penalties for effluent limitation violations specifically identified in the Record of Violation (Attachment A), attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, that occurred between November 2017 through May 2018.

**NOTICE OF VIOLATION**

Based on the Discharger's self-monitoring reports, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) Prosecution Team sent the Discharger a Notice of Violation (NOV) on 6 July 2020 notifying the Discharger of effluent limitation violations of the California Water Code. The Central Valley Water Board Prosecution Team provided the Discharger with an opportunity to review and contest the violations listed in the NOV. Following the Discharger's review of the NOV, the Discharger provided a response on 16 July 2020 concurring with the violations and calculation of the mandatory minimum penalty in the NOV.

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KARL E. LONGLEY ScD, P.E., CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, ESQ., EXECUTIVE OFFICER

364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205, Redding, CA 96002 | [www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley)

### **STATUTORY LIABILITY**

Water Code sections 13385(h) and (i) require the assessment of a mandatory minimum penalty of \$3,000 for each specified serious and chronic effluent limit violation. The Discharger may also be subject to discretionary administrative civil liabilities pursuant to Water Code section 13385(c) of up to \$10,000 for each day in which the violation occurs, and \$10 for each gallon discharged but not cleaned up in excess of 1,000 gallons. These mandatory minimum penalties and discretionary administrative civil liabilities may be assessed by the Central Valley Water Board beginning with the date that the violations first occurred. The formal enforcement action that the Central Valley Water Board uses to assess such liability is an administrative civil liability complaint, although the Central Valley Water Board may instead refer such matters to the Attorney General's Office for prosecution. If referred to the Attorney General for prosecution, the Superior Court may assess up to \$25,000 for each day in which the violation occurs, and \$25 for each gallon discharged but not cleaned up in excess of 1,000 gallons.

### **SETTLEMENT OFFER**

The Discharger can avoid the issuance of a formal enforcement action and settle the alleged violations identified in Attachment A by participating in the Expedited Payment Letter (EPL) Program.

To promote resolution of these violations, the Central Valley Water Board Prosecution Team makes this Conditional Offer. The Central Valley Water Board Prosecution Team proposes to resolve these violations without the issuance of a formal enforcement action through this Conditional Offer assessing **nine thousand dollars (\$9,000)** in mandatory minimum penalties. If the Discharger accepts this proposal, subject to the conditions below, the Central Valley Water Board Prosecution Team will accept that payment in settlement of any enforcement action that would otherwise arise out of the violations identified in Attachment A. Accordingly, the Central Valley Water Board Prosecution Team will forego issuance of a formal administrative civil liability complaint, will not refer the violations to the Attorney General, and will waive its right to seek additional discretionary civil liabilities for the violations identified in Attachment A. The Conditional Offer does not address or resolve liability for any violation that is not specifically identified in Attachment A, regardless of the date that the violation occurred.

If the Discharger accepts this Conditional Offer, please complete and return the enclosed "Acceptance of Conditional Resolution and Waiver of Right to Hearing; (proposed) Order" (Acceptance and Waiver) on or before **20 September 2020**. The Acceptance and Waiver constitutes a settlement of the violations specifically identified in Attachment A.

## **CONDITIONS FOR CENTRAL VALLEY WATER BOARD ACCEPTANCE OF RESOLUTION**

Federal regulations require the Central Valley Water Board to publish and allow the public thirty (30) days to comment on any settlement of an enforcement action addressing NPDES permit violations (40 C.F.R. section 123.27(d)(2)(iii)). [Notice of this settlement](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/tentative_orders/)([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board\\_decisions/tentative\\_orders/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/tentative_orders/)) will be published on the Central Valley Water Board's website.

If no comments are received within the 30-day comment period, and unless there are new material facts that become available to the Central Valley Water Board, the Executive Officer or his designee will execute the Acceptance and Waiver as a stipulated order assessing the uncontested mandatory minimum penalty amount pursuant to Water Code sections 13385.

However, if significant comments are received in opposition to the settlement, this Conditional Offer may be withdrawn. In that case, the Discharger's waiver pursuant to the Acceptance and Waiver will be void and the violations will be addressed in an administrative civil liability hearing. At the hearing, the Discharger will be free to make arguments to any of the alleged violations, and the Discharger's prior agreement to accept this Conditional Offer will be treated as a settlement communication and will not in any way be binding or used as evidence against the Discharger. The Discharger will be provided with further information on the administrative civil liability hearing process.

If the Discharger chooses to sign the Acceptance and Waiver, full payment of the assessed amount may be submitted with the waiver. However, full payment of the assessed amount shall be due no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the date the Acceptance and Waiver is executed by the Executive Officer. In accordance with California Water Code section 13385(n)(1) and California Water Code section 13385.1(c)(1), funds collected for violations of effluent limitations and reporting requirements pursuant to section 13385 and 13385.1 shall be deposited in the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account. Accordingly, the \$9,000 liability shall **be paid by cashiers or certified check made out to the "State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account"**. Failure to pay the full penalty within the required time period may subject the Discharger to further liability.

The Discharger shall indicate on the check the number of this EPL and send it to the State Water Resources Control Board, Accounting Office, Attn: EPL R5-2020-0551 Payment, PO Box 1888, Sacramento, California, 95812-1888. The waiver and a copy of the check must also be mailed to the Central Valley Water Board at 364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205, Redding, CA, 96002 attention to Mike Nilsen.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this Conditional Offer, please contact Mike Nilsen at (530) 224-4853 or [Michael.Nilsen@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Michael.Nilsen@waterboards.ca.gov).

***Original Signed By***

Clint E. Snyder, P.G.  
Assistant Executive Officer

MN:mb

Enclosures (2):  
Attachment A Record of Violations  
Acceptance of Conditional Resolution and Waiver of Right to Hearing

cc without enclosures:

Eric Magnan, USEPA, Region 9, San Francisco  
David Boyers, Office of Enforcement, SWRCB, Sacramento  
Julie Macedo, Office of Enforcement, SWRCB, Sacramento  
Patrick Pulupa, Central Valley Water Board Advisory Team, Rancho Cordova  
Jessica Jahr, Office of Chief Counsel, SWRCB, Sacramento  
Adam Laputz, Central Valley Water Board Advisory Team, Rancho Cordova

ATTACHMENT A TO CONDITIONAL OFFER NUMBER R5-2020-0551

Record of Violations Subject to Mandatory Minimum Penalties

**BELL-CARTER OLIVE COMPANY, INC.**  
**BELL-CARTER INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY**  
 RECORD OF VIOLATIONS (November 2017 through May 2018) MANDATORY MINIMUM PENALTIES  
 (Data reported under Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R5-2015-0030)

The following table lists the alleged violations subject to mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs), pursuant to Water Code section 13385(h) and (i).

**Table A - Violations subject to mandatory minimum penalties**

Item	Date	Parameter	Units	Limit	Measured	Period	Violation Type	MMP Type	CIWQS
1	1/01/2017	Zinc, Total Recoverable	µg/L	135	420	Daily Maximum	CAT 2	SIG	1075412
2	11/30/2017	Zinc, Total Recoverable	µg/L	67	119	Average Monthly	CAT 2	SIG	1075411
3	5/16/2018	Zinc, Total Recoverable	µg/L	135	343	Daily Maximum	CAT 2	SIG	1075413

**Table B - Expedited payment amount violations summary**

<b>VIOLATIONS AS OF:</b>	<b>Date of issuance</b>
Group I Serious Violations:	0
Group II Serious Violations:	3
Non-Serious Violations Not Subject to MMPs:	0
Non-serious Violations Subject to MMPs:	0
<b>Total Violations Subject to MMPs:</b>	<b>3</b>

**Mandatory Minimum Penalty Amount for Effluent Limit Violation(s)**

3 Serious Violations x \$3,000 Violation = \$9,000

Total Expedited Payment Amount = \$9,000

## ATTACHMENT A TO CONDITIONAL OFFER NUMBER R5-2020-0551

## Record of Violations Subject to Mandatory Minimum Penalties

**Table C - Definitions**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
CAT 1	Violation of effluent limitation for Group I pollutant.
CAT 2	Violation of effluent limitation for Group II pollutant
CIWQS	<a href="https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ciwqs/">California Integrated Water Quality System database.</a> <a href="https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ciwqs/">https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ciwqs/</a>
Measured	Reported value for the monitoring period by the Discharger.
MMP Type	Classification of the type of MMP violation.
Occurrence Date	Date that a violation occurred. For averaging period limitation violations, such as weekly and monthly averages, the last day of the reporting period is used such as last day of the week (Saturday) and last day of the month, respectively.
SIG	Serious Violation: For Group I pollutants that exceed the effluent limitation by 40 percent or more. For Group II pollutants that exceed the effluent limitation by 20 percent or more.

Offer to Participate in Expedited Payment Letter Program  
EPL R5-2020-0551

**ACCEPTANCE OF CONDITIONAL RESOLUTION**  
**AND WAIVER OF RIGHT TO HEARING; (proposed) ORDER**

Bell-Carter Olive Company, Inc.  
EPL No. R5-2020-0551

By signing below and returning this Acceptance of Conditional Resolution and Waiver of Right to Hearing (Acceptance and Waiver) to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board), the Bell-Carter Olive Company, Inc. (Discharger) hereby accepts the "Offer to Participate in Expedited Payment Letter Program" (Conditional Offer), incorporated herein by reference, and waives the right to a hearing before the Central Valley Water Board to dispute the allegations of violations described in Attachment A.

The Discharger agrees that the Conditional Offer shall serve as a complaint pursuant to Article 2.5 of the California Water Code and that no separate complaint is required for the Central Valley Water Board to assert jurisdiction over the alleged violations through its Chief Prosecutor. The Discharger agrees to pay the penalties required by California Water Code section 13385(h) and/or (i), in the sum of \$9,000 (Expedited Payment Amount), which shall be deemed payment in full of any civil liability pursuant to Water Code section 13385 that otherwise might be assessed for the violations described in Attachment A. The Discharger understands that this Acceptance and Waiver waives its right to contest the allegations in Attachment A and the amount of civil liability assessed for the violations.

The Discharger understands that this Acceptance and Waiver does not address or resolve liability for any violation that is not specifically identified in Attachment A.

Upon execution by the Discharger, the completed Acceptance and Waiver shall be returned via email or U.S. mail to:

Mike Nilsen, Water Resources Control Engineer  
NPDES Permitting/Compliance and Enforcement  
364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205  
Redding, CA 96002  
Phone: (530) 224-4853  
[Michael.Nilsen@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Michael.Nilsen@waterboards.ca.gov)

Offer to Participate in Expedited Payment Letter Program  
EPL R5-2020-0551

The Discharger understands that federal regulations set forth at title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, section 123.27(d)(2)(iii) require the Central Valley Water Board to publish notice of and provide at least thirty (30) days for public comment on any proposed resolution of an enforcement action addressing NPDES permit violations. Accordingly, this Acceptance and Waiver, prior to execution by the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer, will be published as required by law for public comment.

If no comments are received within the notice period that causes the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer to question the Expedited Payment Amount, the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer or his designee will execute this Acceptance and Waiver.

The Discharger understands that if significant comments are received in opposition to the Expedited Payment Amount, the offer on behalf of the Central Valley Water Board to resolve the violations set forth in the NOV may be withdrawn. In that circumstance, the Discharger will be advised of the withdrawal and an administrative civil liability complaint may be issued and the matter may be set for a hearing before the Central Valley Water Board. For such a liability hearing, the Discharger understands that this Acceptance and Waiver executed by the Discharger will be treated as a settlement communication and will not be used as evidence in that hearing.

The Discharger further understands that once the Acceptance and Waiver is executed by the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer or his designee, the full payment required by the deadline set forth below is a condition of this Acceptance and Waiver. In accordance with California Water Code section 13385(n)(1) and California Water Code section 13385.1(c)(1), funds collected for violations of effluent limitations and reporting requirements pursuant to sections 13385 and 13385.1 shall be deposited in the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account. Accordingly, the \$9,000 liability shall be paid by a cashier's or certified check made out to the "State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account". The Discharger may choose to submit the full payment with the Waiver. However, the payment must be submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the date the Acceptance and Waiver is executed by the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer or his designee.

Please mail the check to:

State Water Resources Control Board, Accounting Office  
Attn: EPL R5-2020-0551 Payment  
PO Box 1888  
Sacramento, California, 95812-1888

The Discharger shall also provide a copy of the wavier form and check via email to the Central Valley Water Board ([Michael.Nilsen@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Michael.Nilsen@waterboards.ca.gov)).



Offer to Participate in Expedited Payment Letter Program  
EPL R5-2020-0551

I hereby affirm that I am duly authorized to act on behalf of and to bind the Discharger in the making and giving of this Acceptance and Waiver.

Bell-Carter Olive Company, Inc.

BY: Original Signed By  
Signed Name

9/30/2020  
Date

Ronald Kerr  
Printed Name

IT IS SO ORDERED PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13385

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Patrick Pulupa  
Executive Officer

11/13/2020  
Date