

## Fish Farm Medically Significant Separation Inspection - Suggested Procedure 06-23-2015 SLM

Goal: Document if the fish farm will provide sufficient biosecurity to be able to prevent disease spread between parts of the farm such that they will be allowed to register separate fish farms on the same premises.

ATCP 10.61 (5m)(a) "...Fish farms are considered to be medically separated if all of the following apply:

1. Fish and fish eggs in each fish farm are effectively separated from fish and fish eggs in every other fish farm.
2. Bio-security procedures, including procedures to prevent the commingling of fish, fish eggs, or water that may bear disease organisms, effectively prevent disease transmission between the fish farms..."

Method: Review relevant documents such as fish farm regulations, the farm's medically significant separation application/revised fish farm registration application/new fish farm application, the farm's biosecurity plan, maps, and photos. Interview program manager, animal health inspector, fish farm owner/manager. Inspect the site to determine if the biosecurity measures described in the plan match the physical reality and if physical and procedural separation is sufficient to prevent the spread of disease between the separate entities. Document findings of the inspection and provide a written report.

### Preparation – complete these items in the order that works best to get the information you need

1. Read Fish Farm regulations in 10.61 especially 10.61(5),(5m), (6), (6m), and (7). Review other fish farm regulations to be able to answer questions if they arise. Take a copy of regulations with you when you do the inspection in case you need them. Review the Department website for updates or other information that may be of interest to the fish farmer that you can provide to them when you do the inspection.
2. Case Assignment - Make sure you understand the assignment. Check that the following information is provided with the case assignment. If information is missing, obtain it from the program manager, the aquaculture licensing/permitting associate, and the animal health inspector who inspects the fish farm.
  - legal entity
  - contact information for farm manager
  - livestock premises registration number
  - copy of the application for medically significant separation (These items may be in the application for medically significant separation, in the application for revision of the fish farm license, or in the new applications for the proposed separate fish farms.)
    - description of the proposed separation,
    - a written biosecurity plan,
    - map or diagram of the proposed separation
  - reviewing a copy of the fish farm applications will be helpful in determining the overall layout of the farm and the management structure of the business.
3. Discuss the case with the program manager to get information about conversations with the owner that will provide additional details about why the owner wants medically significant separation, what the owner is trying to accomplish with the separation, how to conduct the inspection, and what to look

for. Often the program manager has been on the farm and knows what species are being raised, knows how the farm was managed in the past, and has talked with the owner about how the owner proposes to do business in the future after the separation.

4. Get a map of the layout of the farm. Satellite photos, Google Earth, premises database satellite maps, applications to DNR for pond construction/expansion are all good sources. Sometimes the satellite images are too old and will not have all current ponds. Sometimes new pond maps can be found in DNR or county permitting applications. A search of the internet by farm or owner name or even address may find these sources of information. You can also ask the owner to draw a map of the farm layout. If the farm separation will involve indoor tanks, ask the owner for a diagram of the premises if one was not already provided. These maps will be needed to include in your report.

5. Evaluate the proposed plan to determine if the plan can be reasonably expected to accomplish medically significant separation. If not, first talk with the owner about why the separation would not likely pass inspection and determine what measures the owner will take to modify the plan. Ask for a written revised plan to review and discuss with the owner prior to scheduling the inspection.

6. Talk to the Animal Health Inspector who does the farm's routine inspections. Discuss the farm operation, any previous problems, and what potential problems they may see with the farm's proposal. Invite the animal health inspector to accompany you on the medically significant separation inspection to discuss recordkeeping requirements for the separate farms, movement of fish between the separate farms, and expectations about what documentation the owner will need to provide to the Inspector to show separation and legal movement in future inspections.

7. Talk to the owner/manager about the medically significant separation, how they have accomplished it and how they are documenting that the biosecurity measures are being followed (such as activity logs, checklists, or sign-in sheets.) If they have not provided a written biosecurity plan previously, ask them to prepare one and send it to you prior to the inspection. Make sure they know that all elements of the medical separation must be in place prior to the inspection so that on the day of the inspection you can verify that the separation is complete. Making sure all elements are in place prior to your inspection avoids reinspection and the required reinspection fee.

8. Make sure the inspection fee has been paid -see 10.61(5m)(c).

9. Schedule the inspection. Include the animal health inspector for the area if possible.

#### Elements of the Biosecurity Plan

1. Diagram or map of the premises and the proposed separate entities

2. Description of how the physical separation of the premises is accomplished such as:

- separate ponds, buildings, tanks
- walls, plastic curtain dividers floor to ceiling

3. Description of how fish and eggs will be separated by how they are managed within the facilities

4. Describe water flow and separation of water

- describe water sources and water discharge patterns

- describe water flow within the facility between ponds or tanks to assure no transfer between the farms
- describe how spills, splash, and spray while cleaning will be dealt with to avoid transfer of water between the entities

5. Describe procedures used to prevent disease transfer from fomites such as:

- Separate equipment (containers, nets, boats, etc.- separate equipment of different color, marked in some way, different style of equipment so mistakenly mixing up equipment is more difficult)
- Disinfection of equipment prior to use in other areas (method of disinfection, a record/log of disinfections and movement of shared equipment)
- employees/workers (separate workers for different areas or measure taken by employees to clean and disinfect prior to going to separate farm – such as change clothes, change gloves, disinfect boots.)
- boot washes (maintained properly), sanitizer stations, clear demarcation lines between separate farms
- traffic patterns of people and vehicles to avoid disease transmission

6. Describe how the biosecurity records will be kept. Provide copies of logs or forms that will be used to record and document that procedures were properly performed at the frequency and timing indicated in the biosecurity plan

- Disinfectant concentration testing? Footbath change logs? Sign-in sheets? Activity logs? Maintenance records? Equipment use logs?

### Physical Inspection of Premises

Conduct an on-site inspection of the premises to determine if the biosecurity measures are the same as represented in the biosecurity plan.

Do this inspection in conjunction with the Animal Health Inspector if possible.

View and ask about:

- Physical separation
- Separation of activities between the areas via sanitizing stations, traffic patterns, cleaning stations etc.
- Movement of fish and eggs
- Movement of water
- Movement of employees and equipment
- Disinfection or other measures taken to avoid transfer of disease
- Supplies and equipment for maintaining the separation are in place (eg. Changes of boots, extra nets, soaking tubs/buckets, disinfectant, posted signs, log books, et.)
- Records of fish movement, activity logs, checklists, or sign-in sheets that are part of the biosecurity plan to document measures taken to prevent disease movement between entities on the premises

Take pictures if possible so that you can more easily recall what you saw when you write your report. You can also use pictures in your report to document and illustrate the biosecurity measures you describe in your report.

Ask yourself if the measures being taken by the farm would prevent disease transmission between the separate business entities on the same premises.

Inspection Report – send to supervisor (attach to email or put on shared drive for retrieval)

Complete a case summary report form as a coversheet. Include a recommendation on the front of the case summary form as to whether to grant or deny the application for medically significant separation. Do not include the details of the inspection on the case summary report coversheet, instead note that the inspection report is attached.

Inspection report should include:

- Legal entity
- Date of inspection
- Parties that participated in the inspection, include the titles/functions of the people present
- Short summary of the type of business being conducted at the farm and how the proposed separation of the farm entities would work (e.g. hatching wild-collected eggs and raising them for stocking vs. farmed fish for food consumption vs. cold-water species farmed fish vs. pond production of game fish vs. baitfish, etc.)
- Description of the findings of the inspection. Include specific details of any discrepancies or problems that should result in denial of the application.
- Evaluation of whether the farm meets the requirements to be able to grant medically significant separation.
- Attach the map/diagram with the different entities indicated and label any areas referred to in the report
- Attach any relevant pictures referred to in the report
- Attach the farm's biosecurity plan including examples of the records forms being used to document that biosecurity measures are being properly followed such as logs or checklists