

Massachusetts Racetrack, a Large CAFO, To Pay a Civil Penalty of \$1.25 Million to Resolve Violations of the Clean Water Act (CWA)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Justice announced that Sterling Suffolk Racecourse LLC will pay a civil penalty of \$1.25 million to resolve violations of the Clean Water Act (CWA) at its Suffolk Downs racetrack facility in Revere and East Boston, Mass. The company is also spending more than \$3 million to prevent polluted water from entering nearby waterways and will perform three environmental projects worth approximately \$742,000 that will provide water quality monitoring and protection efforts for more than 123 square miles of watershed. The terms of the settlement are contained in a consent decree lodged in federal court in Boston today.

Sterling Suffolk Racecourse LLC (Suffolk) owns and operates Suffolk Downs, a 161-acre thoroughbred racing facility located in East Boston and Revere, Massachusetts. The facility includes two concentric racetracks, a grandstand, clubhouse, ancillary buildings and parking areas. The facility also includes 32 stable buildings, approximately 1200 horse stalls, feed storage areas, manure storage areas, dead animal storage areas, animal walkways and associated areas. Because 500 or more horses are stabled at the facility for at least 45 days of the year, Suffolk Downs is a large concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO).

Suffolk violated section 301 of the Clean Water Act by discharging pollutants (e.g., manure, urine and bedding materials) from a CAFO to waters of the United States without a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

The facility upgrades and the improved management practices implemented as a result of federal enforcement actions will annually prevent wastewater contaminated with an estimated 193 tons of horse manure, urine and associated bedding materials from discharging into Belle Isle Inlet and Boston Harbor.

Pursuant to the settlement, Suffolk will implement three SEPs, at a total cost of approximately \$742,000. Two of the SEPs are projects designed to monitor the water quality of the Mystic River and the Saugus River watersheds. The third SEP involves the installation of a boardwalk at Belle Isle Marsh, the largest surviving salt marsh in Boston Harbor. The boardwalk is designed to provide community access to the marsh without causing harm to sensitive wetland vegetation or destabilizing the marsh's riparian buffer.