

Regional Water Quality Control Board
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report
8:30 A.M., Wednesday, February 21, 2019
Regional Water Board Office
5550 Skylane Blvd, Suite A
Santa Rosa, CA

ITEM: 9

SUBJECT: Renewal of Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements, General Water Quality Certification, and Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program Order No. R1-2019-0004 (*Gil Falcone*)

BOARD ACTION: The Board will consider adoption of Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements and General Water Quality Certification for the Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program Order No. R1-2019-0004 and Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R1-2019-0004. The Order and Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) will serve to revise and reauthorize for five years the previously authorized Order and MRP No. R1-2013-0059 that expired on November 20, 2018.

BACKGROUND: On November 20, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted Order No. R1-2013-0059 and Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R1-2013-0059 for the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District's (District) Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program (Program).

The Program was developed to increase the regulatory efficiency of various state and federal permitting agencies for 10 different conservation and restoration practices implemented by the District. The conservation practices allowed through the Program cover a range of different activity types, including but not limited to: erosion and sediment control, fish-migration barrier removal, instream habitat restoration, invasive plant removal, and riparian restoration.

In 2012, the District analyzed potential impacts from the Program for conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by conducting an initial study and mitigated negative declaration (MND). The MND describes a range of environmental protection and species impact avoidance measures that are included as operational standards in all projects conducted through the Program. These comprehensive operational standards include environmental protection measures related to: site stabilization, spill prevention, temporal restrictions, cumulative effects, and more.

In the last five years since the 2013 Order and MRP were adopted, the District has completed 10 conservation and restoration projects across 24 separate properties, and treated approximately 242 individual sites. Through these projects the District has: treated approximately 30 miles of road to reduce chronic sediment delivery to watercourses; decommissioned 15 miles of road; upgraded 97 culverts to the 100-year storm event flow; restored 1,750 linear feet of stream bank; removed six fish passage barriers; and installed

four bridges. Stream improvements included removal of over 500 feet of invasive *Arundo donax* with riparian restoration, installation of 11 large wood habitat structures and re-opening over seven miles of anadromous habitat in Mill Creek.

DISCUSSION: Reapproval of this Order and MRP continues this successful program for 5 years and increases our regulatory efficiency while gaining valuable water quality improvements. This strong-partnership Program allows our agency to leverage our limited grant funding dollars effectively, efficiently and adaptively through annual project prioritization, selection and authorization. This Order and MRP authorize proven NRCS conservation and restoration practices and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures identified through the CEQA process to be protective of water quality.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES: No material changes to the 2019 Order. Order No. R1-2019-0004 now contains all current standard conditions issued in 401 water quality certifications by the Regional Water Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Staff issued a 45-day public notice of hearing and draft order adoption in the Press Democrat, the Ukiah Daily Journal, on the Regional Water Board's website, and through lyris lists (November 24, 2018 – January 8, 2019). No comments were received.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends adoption of Order No. R1-2019-0004 and MRP R1-2019-0004, as proposed.

**SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTS:**

1. Order No. R1-2019-0004, Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements and General Water Quality Certification for the Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program; and Order No. R1-2019-0004 Monitoring and Reporting Program
2. *Mendocino County Resource Conservation District Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study for the Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program*
3. Notice of Public Hearing