

**Public Notice for Section 401 Water Quality Certification
and/or Waste Discharge Requirements**

CDOT – Highway 161, Lost River Bridge Replacement
WDID No. 1A05144WNSI

Siskiyou County

On October 31, 2005, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Cindy Anderson, representing the California Department of Transportation (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, Water Quality Certification to replace an existing bridge on Highway 161 over the Lost River. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Lost River in the Tule Lake Hydrologic Subarea No. 105.92.

The proposed project is located on the California and Oregon border where State Route 161 crosses the Lost River, approximately 0.3 miles west of the town of Hatfield. The existing bridge needs a new deck and has been identified as having severe structural deficiencies. The applicant proposes to remove the existing 241.5 foot long and 30 foot wide bridge, and to replace it with a 261 foot long and 42.3 foot wide reinforced steel bridge. The highway approaches will be widened to match the new bridge alignment and existing drainage ditches along the highway will be reconstructed to accommodate the new alignment.

Proposed activities associated with the Lost River bridge replacement project include installation of a clean gravel pad within the active stream channel to create a temporary surface for heavy equipment to work during removal of the old bridge and construction of the new bridge. The gravel pad will extend from approximately 100 feet upstream of the bridge to approximately 100 feet downstream of the bridge and will span the entire width of the channel. Culverts will be placed within the gravel pad to divert the stream flow through the work area. Geotextile material will be placed under the gravel to protect the wetlands and river bottom and to allow for thorough removal of the gravel fill. Rock slope protection around the abutments of the existing bridge will be removed and replaced around the new abutments. The existing piers will be removed completely or will be cut off at least 3 feet below the bottom of the stream channel. Cofferdams will be installed in the stream channel for construction of the new bridge piers. Dewatering the cofferdams will be necessary. The applicant is proposing to pump water from within the cofferdams into a 20,000-gallon tank to remove sediment prior to returning the water to the Lost River below the work area. Some of the water may be pumped into trucks and used onsite for dust control. Sediment removed from the tank will be incorporated into the roadway.

The proposed project will result in 0.50 acre of temporary impact and 0.002 acre of permanent impact to the stream channel. The proposed project will also result in 0.33 acre of temporary impact and 0.01 acre of permanent impact to wetlands. The wetland area that will be permanently impacted by the project is located at the end of a culvert on the southeast side of the bridge. This 0.01-acre wetland area will be filled during the widening and realignment of the highway approach. Proposed compensatory mitigation involves creation of 0.01-acre of wetland in an area adjacent to the existing wetland that will be filled. Noncompensatory mitigation for this project includes the use of Best Management Practices for cofferdam dewatering, waste

handling, sediment and turbidity control, and heavy equipment use and concrete use near a waterway.

The Lost River is a perennial stream with regulated flows for irrigation water delivery. Flows are regulated such that lower water levels occur during the winter and higher water levels occur during the summer irrigation season. The Lost River sucker and shortnose sucker are endangered fish species that may be present in the project area. Spawning adult suckers begin their upstream migration out of Tule Lake as early as February each year. In the area of the proposed project the Lost River provides a seasonal migration corridor for the suckers; however, the open sandy-bottom is poor spawning habitat for both species. The temporary stream diversion culverts will be designed to provide fish passage.

The project is scheduled for construction between July 2006 and September 2008. All work conducted prior to installation of the stream diversion and within the wetted channel will take place between July 1 and January 15 to avoid potential impacts to migrating suckers. The applicant is planning to conduct this project in two stages over a two-year period. Traffic will be routed onto the northern half of the existing bridge while the southern half is removed and reconstructed. Traffic will be shifted to the new bridge after construction the southern half is complete.

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for authorization to perform the project under Nationwide Permit Nos. 23 and 33, pursuant to Clean Water Act, Section 404. The California Department of Transportation, as the lead agency for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, determined that this project will have no significant effect on the environment and that it is categorically exempt from CEQA. The applicant has applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (1600 Permit) from the California Department of Fish and Game.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801, or at dprat@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.