

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements
(Dredge/Fill Projects)**

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Mill Creek Campground Culvert Replacement Project
WDID No. 1B05029WNDN

Del Norte County

On March 23, 2005, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Kathy Amann, representing the California Department of Parks and Recreation, requesting Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the replacement of three culverts located in Mill Creek Campground in Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, approximately seven miles southeast of Crescent City, Del Norte County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Mill Creek Hydrologic Subarea No. 103.13.

The purpose of the proposed project is to upgrade the culverts to appropriate sizes for a 100-year storm event to protect of stream corridors from flooding, erosion, and sedimentation damage. The proposed project will be done in conjunction with the replacement of water distribution system piping located under the existing culverts. The culverts are located in unnamed tributaries to West Branch Mill Creek that intersect with the campground roads. Each culvert is approximately forty feet long. Culvert #1 is situated in the south campground between campsites 3 and 4. The existing culvert will be upgraded from 30-inches to 48-inches. Culverts #2 and #3 are located in the north campground loop and are in the same drainage. Culvert #2, a 36-inch diameter culvert between campsites #94 and #95, will be upgraded to a 72-inch diameter culvert. Culvert #3, a 24-inch diameter culvert between campsites #110 and #113, will be replaced with two side-by-side 24-inch diameter culverts.

The proposed project is scheduled for a two-week period between August 15 and September 15, 2005, when the affected drainages are typically dry. If water is present in the drainages, sandbag cofferdams will be installed for dewatering and water will be diverted around the work site. Each culvert will be excavated to a depth that will allow the culvert to be covered with 18 inches of compacted road base and asphalt, allowing placement of the culvert in the exact location of the existing culvert. This installation technique will result in minimal disturbance to the stream channel beyond the 40 feet of existing culvert, headwall, and slope protection. Culverts #1 and #2 will require installation of new concrete headwall structures. Excavation is not required to install the headwalls. The headwall structures will consist of Sackcrete (concrete) bags secured by half-inch diameter rebar. State Park staff will conduct the culvert replacement work and a private contractor will replace the water distribution system piping. An asphalt cutoff saw, dump truck, excavator, and various hand tools would be used to perform the proposed culvert project.

The project will permanently impact approximately 0.02-acre of jurisdictional waters of the United States. Permanent impacts are to areas currently occupied by existing culverts. The following precautions will be taken to minimize impacts from construction: equipment will not be operated in the stream channel; vegetation disturbance will be minimized; an emergency spill kit will be present on site; and only well maintained construction equipment will be used. Disposal of construction, excavation, and dewatering materials, debris and soils will be done according to accepted protocols.

An Environmental Specialist, Fishery Biologist, and Supervising Botanist with the National Park Service and an Ecologist with the California Park Service have evaluated the proposed project. The Del Norte State Park is primarily second growth redwood forest but also contains old growth forest. The old growth forest is habitat for the federally listed northern spotted owl and the federally threatened and California State listed marbled murrelet. All three of the culvert sites and the majority of the Mill Creek Campground are located outside the seasonal noise restriction buffer zone used during the breeding season of these listed species.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for this project. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and erosion control. The applicant has received authorization (File No. 289570N) to implement the project under Nationwide Permit 3 and 33 from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant to the Clean Water Act, Section 404. The California Department of Parks and Recreation, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA (Class 2, Section 15302). 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 is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and 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 notice. 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.