

June 28, 2005

**Public Notice for 401 Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements
(Dredge/Fill Projects)**

**Mr. William Gilbert & Huffman Engineering
Gilbert Property Bank Stabilization Project
WDID No. 1B04144WNSO
Sonoma County**

On October 14, 2004 the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Rob Huffman (Applicant) of Huffman Engineering, on behalf of Mr. William Gilbert (property Owner), requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the permanent disturbance of 0.04 acres within the banks of the Russian River, associated with the placement of rock riprap for bank stabilization in Monte Rio, Sonoma County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to the Waters of the United States associated with Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00, Guerneville Hydrologic Subarea No. 14.11.

The proposed project involves the placement of 690 cubic yards of rock riprap along a 0.04-acre section of the Russian River bank near 19595 Redwood Drive (APN 094-250-053), Monte Rio, Sonoma County. The purpose of the project is to stabilize the riverbank in an effort to protect the remaining property from further erosion.

According to the Applicant, the bank area in question has eroded to a nearly vertical 35 foot high exposed slope, and is threatening the Owner's residence. The project as proposed would involve the excavation of a 4 foot deep by 8 foot wide keyway along the water's edge, at the toe of the slope for the placement of ½ to ¼ ton rock, filter fabric, and gravel backfill in the trench and along the exposed slope. Vegetation removal will include grasses and on-site willows. The Applicant proposes to install the riprap up the bank to establish a slope of 1.5:1. Rock will be placed approximately 35 feet high.

The Applicant intends to keep all equipment out of the active river, and work in a manner to avoid all direct contact with the flowing water. Temporary silt fences are proposed to minimize seepage of groundwater and sediment from the exposed trench into the active river. Upon completion of riprap installation, the Applicant proposes to plant willow sprigs throughout the constructed bank to reestablish the riparian corridor along the river.

Coho and Chinook Salmon are present in this section of the Russian River. The United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) issued a letter outlining conditions to avoid and mitigate impacts to these species. Conditions included working during the warmer summer months, and increased vegetation monitoring to ensure success and improved habitat conditions. In light of conditions outlined in the letter and in the Nationwide Permit #13 obtained by the Applicant, the USACE concluded that the project as proposed was not likely to adversely affect Coho and Chinook Salmon, or Steelhead (File No. 288690N).

The project affects 92 lineal feet, 0.04 acres of jurisdictional Waters of the United States within the banks of the Russian River.

Mr. William Gilbert is requesting that the Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements be issued before Summer, 2005. Construction is projected for a 5-day duration, and will be completed no later than October 14th, 2005. Construction is not proposed for the rainy season between October 15th and May 15th.

Compensatory Mitigation is required for this project. To mitigate the permanent impacts from the proposed rock riprap, the Applicant intends to fill any voids or gaps within the rock with native soil and a diverse strata of native riparian plants to include willow, juncus, calycanthus and others. Said plant mixture will be monitored for success for three years, and irrigated for the first year following planting. According to the Applicant, aggressive revegetation efforts will establish improved habitat on the existing exposed bank, and the root matrix will help stabilize the bank and rock before the heavy flows of winter.

Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of biodegradable filter fabric along the toe of the bank to minimize sediment discharge into the river during construction. Other measures proposed include the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and erosion control such as erosion control blankets, straw wattles, and aggressive willow tree planting to protect the slope from future erosion. Work will be conducted during the warm summer months, when water temperatures are too warm to support salmon, and water levels are lower to minimize impacts.

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, is currently evaluating the project pursuant to CEQA requirements.

The Owner has obtained a Streambed Alteration Agreement (CDFG 1600) from the California Department of Fish and Game, Notification No. 1600-2003-5317-3. Application is also pending (Corps file #288690N) with the U.S. Army Corps for Nationwide Permit No 13-*Bank Stabilization*.

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 Andrew Jensen at (707) 576-2683 or AJensen@waterboards.ca.gov, within 21 days of the posting of this notice.