

July 24, 2008

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

Humboldt County Department of Public Works – Lower Cappell Road, Post Mile 2.5,
Culvert Restoration Project
WDID No. 1B08059WNHU

Humboldt County

On April 2, 2008, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Humboldt County Department of Public Works (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to replacing a culvert on Chqui Creek at Lower Cappell Road and restoring the scoured embankment near the culvert outlet. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Chqui Creek in the Klamath Glen Hydrologic Subarea No. 105.11.

Heavy rains in late 2005 and early 2006 caused the 24-inch diameter and 40-foot long culvert on Chqui Creek to plug with debris and the creek overtopped its banks. The high flows were diverted over Lower Cappell Road and caused erosion along the road shoulder and around the culvert outlet. The proposed project involves excavating the roadway, removing the existing culvert, installing a 36-inch diameter culvert in the same location, and restoring the roadway surface. Excess loose material around the culvert inlet area will be removed, and scoured areas around the culvert outlet and along the embankment will be restored.

Proposed culvert excavation and replacement activities will temporarily impact 600 square feet and 60 linear feet of ephemeral stream channel including 400 square feet and 40 linear feet of channel that is already filled by the existing 24-inch diameter culvert and fill. The proposed rock slope protection at the culvert outlet will permanently impact 36 square feet of stream channel and 12 linear feet streambank. The proposed 36-inch diameter and 40-foot long culvert will be placed in the same location as the existing culvert and will not result in any additional permanent impacts to the stream channel.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed project. Noncompensatory mitigation includes seeding and mulching disturbed areas. Noncompensatory mitigation also includes the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control and for operation of heavy equipment in a stream channel. The proposed project is scheduled for construction during the summer when there will be little or no water in the creek channel.

The applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under nationwide permit, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. The County of Humboldt determined that this project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1 – existing facilities, and Section 15304 – minor alterations to land. Regional Water Board staff have determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review (Class 1, Section 15301 – existing facilities) and anticipate filing a Notice of Exemption for this project.

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 submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

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