

August 24, 2005

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

**Bellevue School District
Taylor Mountain Elementary School Project
WDID No. 1B05065WNSO
Sonoma County**

On May 17, 2005 the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Bill Enrich of Golden Bear Biostudies, on behalf of Mr. Armando Flores of Bellevue School District (Applicant), requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the permanent fill of 0.38 acres of seasonal wetlands associated with the construction of an elementary school in Santa Rosa, Sonoma County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to the waters of the state associated with seasonal wetland within the Laguna Hydrologic Subarea No. 14.21, Middle Russian River Hydrologic Area No. 114.20, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The proposed project involves the construction of an elementary school with parking lots, classrooms, playground, and landscaping on an 11 acre lot, located at 1210 Bellevue Avenue in southeast Santa Rosa, east of Santa Rosa Avenue and Bellevue Avenue, on the east side of Highway 101, APN 044-111-001, Sonoma County. The purpose of the project is to increase the elementary education opportunities available to residents of the local area.

The Applicant is proposing to route storm water runoff from the site into the existing City of Santa Rosa storm water drainage system. Maintenance would then become the responsibility of the Santa Rosa Public Works Department.

The project affects 0.38 acres of jurisdictional Waters of the State, as delineated by Mr. Marco Waaland of Golden Bear Biostudies, and verified by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) in a letter dated July 24, 2003 (File No. 27747N). Special-status plant species surveys were conducted by Golden Bear Biostudies in 2000, and 2003. No special-status plant species were identified on-site (Biological Assessment, Golden Bear Biostudies, May 31, 2003). The California Fish and Wildlife Service (CFWS) has determined that this project will not impact California Tiger Salamander habitat, and has issued a letter of no effect.

Bellevue School District is requesting that the water quality certification and/or waste discharge requirements be issued before the end of the dry season 2005. Construction is projected to take approximately 14 months to completion. Any construction projected to occur during the rainy season of October to April will be subject to additional conditions to ensure winterization techniques are implemented, and to safeguard water quality.

Compensatory Mitigation is required for this project. The Applicant proposes to compensate the loss of 0.38 acres of seasonal wetland by creating 0.57 acres of wetland at the southeast end of the project site. The remaining 0.30 acre of seasonal wetlands is proposed to be permanently protected and the 0.57 acres will be additional, for a total of 0.87 acres located on the 2.1 acre southeastern portion (Wetland Preserve Area) of the overall 11 acre site. This would be a mitigation ratio of 1.5:1, in an effort to offset temporal loss of wetland during construction. The Applicant intends to improve the biological function of the Wetland Preserve Area by creating mitigation wetlands amongst existing wetland for an ecologically connected unit, as opposed to the existing fragmented nature of the wetlands on site. This is proposed by means of creating additional acreages of seasonal wetlands, removing invasive weedy species and debris, planting oak trees in the upland areas between the pools, and enhancing the existing habitat by planting native riparian plant species in the preservation area. The proposed mitigation will be preserved in perpetuity under a conservation easement or deed of trust to the California Department of Fish and Game, as per the Applicant.

Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control, relocation of visible aquatic species (if present) by a certified biologist prior to fill, conducting work during the low-flow or dry season, and development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to incorporate both construction and post-construction storm water BMPs.

The City of Santa Rosa, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, is currently reviewing the project pursuant to CEQA.

The Applicant has obtained coverage under the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Nationwide Permit No.39—*Residential, Commercial, and Institutional Developments* (Corps file #27747N).

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 at AJensen@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The related documents and comments received are on file and may be inspected or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.