

August 31, 2005

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

**Shamrock Materials, Inc.  
Instream Gravel Bar Skimming and Revegetation Project in the  
Cloverdale Reach of the Upper Alexander Valley of the Russian River  
Sonoma County, California**

On February 8, 2005, the Regional Water Board received an application from Shamrock Materials, Inc., (Shamrock) requesting a renewal of its Water Quality Certification that expired on December 31, 2004 and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the instream gravel bar skimming and re-vegetation project in the Russian River and Big Sulphur Creek of the Cloverdale Reach of the Upper Alexander Valley Sonoma County, California. The application, submitted according to administrative regulations and Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401, covers disturbance to the waters of the United States associated with gravel extraction and associated activities within the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

On May 31, 2005, a Public Notice was issued by the Regional Water Board for the above mentioned project, however, further research and submitted materials have lead staff at the Regional Water Board to re-notice the project with the updated information.

Shamrock Materials, Inc., proposes to skim eight gravel bars including: (1) the Naco-West Bar (APN 115-040-003); (2) the Big Sulphur Creek Bar (APN 116-190-063); (3) the Bella Vista Ranch Bar (APN 116-190-006); (4) the All Coast Forest Products Bar (APN 116-260-016); (5) the Vimark Bar (APN 116-270-001); (6) the Ferrari/Carano Gravel Bar (APNs 116-270-040, 116-280-080, 116-310-014); (7) the Louisiana Pacific (LP) Bar (APN 117-050-017); and (8) the Field Gravel Bar (APNs 117-060-003, -038, -010, -016, -023, -025, -043) in the Upper Alexander Valley in the Russian River, near Cloverdale, California. The total project area encompasses approximately 98.3 acres of gravel bars, of which approximately 94.6 acres are located in the Russian River and approximately 3.7 acres are located in Big Sulphur Creek. Gravel extraction will be accomplished by surface skimming of the above mentioned gravel bars above the previously established baseline in accordance with the Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management Plan. No operations are proposed in the wetted stream, or below water level. Buffer zones will separate the operational areas from the low-water channel.

The project is proposed to begin in May 2006, skimming generally progresses from north to south, and is not normally conducted simultaneously at multiple sites. Stream crossings will be utilized to access the gravel bars. The number of stream crossings and location may vary from year to year based upon the number of sites to be skimmed. In addition to conditions set forth by the Regional Water Board, additional conditions are imposed by the County of Sonoma, California Department of Fish and Game, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and National Marine Fisheries Service. Annual extensive monitoring is required including data gathering and reporting. The use permits issued by Sonoma County under the Aggregate Resource Management Plan (ARM) requires standard and site specific monitoring, including site inspections, full channel cross sections, and annual aerial photographs.

Mitigation measures will include revegetation where riparian vegetation is removed as a result of the project. Willow saplings, cottonwood, and other native riparian tree species found in the adjacent riparian area shall be replanted in trenches along the low-flow channel buffer, the outer river banks or within the upper bar buffer. The area planted will be of equal areato the area from which the vegetation is removed and be monitored each year by a qualified biologist, for a total of three years. At least 75 percent success will be achieved at the end of the three year monitoring period, or additional plantings will be required.

The following monitoring documents will be required and will be submitted to the Regional Water Board and other permitting resource agencies annually:

1. Spring and Fall Field Cross-Sections
2. Stream Inventory and Fisheries Monitoring Report for the Russian River, Alexander Valley, CA
3. Bank Erosion in Russian River near Cloverdale
4. Fine Sediment Storage in Russian River near Cloverdale
5. Spawning Gravel Monitoring
6. Annual Monitoring of Groundwater Recharge Potential in Upper Alexander Valley
7. Suspended Sediment Monitoring Report

The following measures are proposed to be incorporated in the project to prevent, reduce or eliminate potential impacts, however additional measures may be outlined in the final permit:

- Issuance of future Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) will be dependent on review of all monitoring results. In addition, the Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) permit may be rescinded by the Regional Water Board if violations of the North Coast Regional Water Board's Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan) occur. Water quality monitoring will consist of turbidity monitoring upstream and downstream of the mining sites during the first flood event that results in flow over the mined areas. The exact monitoring locations and timing will be proposed by the applicant to the satisfaction and approval of the Executive Officer of the Regional Water Board.
- Mining plans and monitoring data submitted to the County of Sonoma PRMD, and the Department of Fish & Game, shall also be submitted to the Regional Water Board.
- The amount of gravel extracted under this certification action shall be based on annual aggregate replenishment rates as outlined in the Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management (ARM) Plan.
- The extraction sites may be visited and assessed by Regional Water Board staff to document compliance with this certification.
- Extraction activities will comply with all provisions contained in the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region.
- All extraction operations, extraction techniques, reclamation activities, monitoring, project impact minimization measures, revegetation activities and terms of conditions will be implemented as described in the National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion, the final Regional Water Board Order, the California Department of Fish and Game permit, and Sonoma County.

- Monitoring information received on an annual basis may necessitate modifying the conditions of this permit to provide an adaptive management approach. Such modifications will not require a new permit.

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, determined that the Naco-West Bar, Big Sulphur Creek Bar (Gerdes Property), Bella Vista Bar, and All Coast Forest Products Bar mining activities qualified for a mitigated negative declaration (Resolution No. 96-0970, July 16, 1996) and the Vimark Bar, Ferrari/Carano Gravel Bar, Louisiana Pacific (LP) bar and the Field Gravel Bar also qualified for a mitigated negative declaration (Resolution No. 01-1004, August 14, 2001). The nearest receiving water is Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The annual gravel extraction is scheduled to begin in May and be completed by the end of October of each year. Staff is 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 Andrew Jensen at (707) 576-2683, or at [ajensen@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:ajensen@waterboards.ca.gov) within 21 days of the posting of this notice.