

**Public Notice for Section 401 Water Quality Certification  
and/or Waste Discharge Requirements**

CDOT – Bracut Water Supply Pipeline Project  
WDID No. 1B05125WNHU

Humboldt County

On September 9, 2005, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Gail Popham, representing the California Department of Transportation (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, Water Quality Certification for a proposed project to install three new water supply pipelines through wetlands near Bracut, Humboldt County. The application was deemed complete on December 23, 2005, following submittal of additional information showing the actual area of potential temporary wetland impacts and the additional fees that are owed, and a plan for installation of earthen plugs in the excavated trench. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Rocky Gulch and Humboldt Bay in the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00

Caltrans is proposing this project because the Office of the State Fire Marshall has determined that the existing four-inch diameter water supply pipeline to the recently expanded Caltrans Bracut Maintenance Station is insufficient for fire suppression purposes. The applicant proposes to install three new pipelines, including one new ten-inch diameter pipeline for fire suppression purposes and one new four-inch diameter pipeline for domestic water supply to the maintenance station and one new two-inch diameter pipeline to replace an existing domestic water supply that serves a local business.

All the new pipelines will connect to the Mad River Pipeline water main to the east of the maintenance station. The proposed pipelines would be installed within the same 1,300-foot long trench. Approximately 800 feet of the proposed trench is located in wetlands. The trench will also be excavated across a small drainage ditch. The trench is to be excavated to an average depth and width of 5 feet. The pipelines will be bedded in sand and the upper 2.5 feet of the trench will be backfilled with native soil. The applicant proposes to install trench plugs on each side of the drainage ditch in order to prevent water from draining into and through the backfill in either direction. The native material trench plugs will be 2 feet long and as deep and wide as the trench. The applicant anticipates that approximately 400 cubic yards of excess soil from the trench excavation will require offsite disposal at an approved location.

The proposed project will be implemented in 2006 or 2007. Construction activities in the wetlands and drainage ditch are proposed to be conducted between June 1 and October 15. The project does not require removal of trees or mature vegetation and is not likely to adversely affect these wetlands that are also used for cattle grazing. Approximately 0.97 acre of wetlands will be temporarily impacted by the proposed project due to trenching and equipment access activities. There will be no permanent impacts to the wetlands and compensatory mitigation is not required. Noncompensatory mitigation measures for this project include the use of Best Management Practices for heavy equipment use in wetlands and for sediment and turbidity control.

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for authorization to perform the project, pursuant to Clean Water Act, Section 404. The California Department of Transportation, as the lead agency for CEQA, determined that the

proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment and certified a Negative Declaration on July 20, 2005. 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 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 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 Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801, or at [dprat@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:dprat@waterboards.ca.gov) within 21-days of the posting of this notice.

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