

July 18,2006

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

**California Department of Transportation
Geyserville Bridge Replacement Project
Sonoma County (WDID# 1B06026WNSO)**

On June 29th, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements for the Geyserville Bridge Replacement Project in Sonoma County. The project causes disturbances to Waters of the United States, specifically the Russian River and Plug Creek, in the Geyserville Hydrologic Sub Area 114.25 in the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The project includes the demolition and replacement of the Geyserville Bridge on Highway 128 that was severely damaged during the December 2005 winter storms. The bridge is closed to traffic, with all traffic detoured to Lytton Station Road.

Caltrans has completed the installation of the temporary construction trestle, providing a platform for the construction of the new bridge. The trestle is expected to be removed by the end of October 2006. Caltrans has already completed the demolition and removal of the damaged bridge.

Construction of the new bridge has begun with pipes for Bents 2, 4, 5, 6, and 10 already installed. Each of the 48-inch steel shell piles will be mucked out prior to the installation of steel rebar. All mucked material will be placed in trucks and hauled offsite or used as backfill material around the abutments outside of the river channel.

The new bridge will be approximately 51-feet wide consisting of two 12-foot wide traveled ways, two eight feet wide shoulders, and a five-foot wide sidewalk (on the southern side of the bridge). The construction zone is estimated to be 110 feet on each side of the center-line of the existing road extending approximately 300 feet past both the existing east and west abutments. The construction area, based on these estimates, will encompass about eight acres. Approximately 2.5 of these acres are within the banks of the Russian River. The remaining 5.5 acres is upland area, some of which will only be "aerial" encroachments and will not involve any on-the-ground disturbance. There will be no vehicle storage, fueling, or staging allowed on the river-bed nor are any vehicles allowed in wetted channel.

According to the "Biological Assessment For the replacement of the Geyserville Russian River Bridge," a site assessment was performed by Caltrans. The following species are known to occur in the vicinity of the projects: the endangered Central California Coastal Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus Kisutch*), the threatened Central California Coastal steelhead salmon (*O. Mykiss*), the threatened Central Valley Steelhead (*O. Mykiss*), and the California coastal Chinook salmon (*O. Tshawytscha*).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has proposed Caltrans implement best management practices (BMPs) to reduce impacts to aquatic environments including, but not limited to, operations that minimize the footprint of the project site with

special effort made to avoid unnecessary impacts to riparian vegetation, stream bank stability, and water pollution from machinery and project activities.

A seasonal tributary, Plug Creek, will be placed in a temporary culvert. The culvert will be removed by October 31, 2006.

Non-compensatory mitigation for this project will be attained through the revegetation of the riparian zone, removal of invasive plants from the construction zone, restoration of the gravel bed and monitoring of the vegetation plantings for a period of five years.

The Regional Water Board has determined that the project is statutorily exempt pursuant to the California Governor's January 2, 2006, proclamation of a State of Emergency for Sonoma County due to severe rain events in December 2005, PRC 21080.

The Geyserville Russian River Bridge Replacement Project was scheduled to begin February 24, 2006, and end before October 15, 2006. 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 Mona Dougherty at (707) 570-3761 or mdougherty@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.