

July 19, 2006

Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)
City of Santa Rosa
Audubon Staging Area Restoration Project
Sonoma County (WDID# 1B06053WNSO)

On April 28, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the City of Santa Rosa (Applicant) requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements for the Audubon Staging Area Restoration Project in Sonoma County. The proposed project causes disturbances to Waters of the State associated with an unnamed tributary to Little Sulphur Creek in the Sulphur Creek Hydrologic Sub Area, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.26.

The proposed project is located in the Mayacamas Mountains in Sonoma County off Pine Flat Road on property owned by the National Audubon Society that was used by the City of Santa Rosa's Geysers Recharge Project for staging, spoils disposal and stockpiling. The site can be reached via Pine Flat Road approximately 8.2 miles past the Sausal Creek Bridge at the base of the Mayacamas Mountains. The site address is 10000 Pine Flat Road (APN 141-070-043) in the Jimtown USGS quadrangle at Township 10N, Range 08W, and Section 5.043. This corresponds to 38°44'17"N latitude and 122°45'50"W longitude. The purpose of the proposed restoration work is to re-create the severely eroding onsite ephemeral stream channel into a stable configuration to reduce downstream sedimentation and increase onsite habitat functions and values.

The ephemeral drainage along the southern boundary of the site is unstable and down-cutting, creating an incised v-shaped drainage. The average width of the scoured channel ranges from 1 to 5 feet with a depth of 10 feet in the eroding and down-cutting southern portion. The proposed project involves the permanent filling of the existing drainage, alteration of the existing grade, re-contouring of the surrounding area to provide an adequate flood plain, relocation of the ephemeral drainage to the north, and taking of appropriate steps to discourage concentrated flows and erosion during high discharge events.

The project also involves the installation of two concrete cut-off walls within the created channel, below grade, in order to provide additional assurance against slope failure. A series of rock energy dissipaters and pools are proposed for installation in the 10% gradient portion, with two-foot-diameter rock spaced down the channel at four locations, and rock slope protection placed in between to fill the voids at an approximate 5% slope with 8-inch drops. The upper portions of the created low gradient channel will consist of installing a thin layer of rock and soil over a turf reinforced mat liner which will provide a three dimensional matrix, promoting plant growth while stabilizing the soil.

The proposed project will temporarily impact 0.003 acres of Waters of the State from the repair of an existing culvert. The proposed project will also permanently impact 0.019 acres (269 linear feet) of Waters of the State due to the filling of the existing drainage with approximately 40 cubic yards of local soil. Compensatory mitigation will be obtained through the creation of a 269 linear foot drainage just north of the filled channel. The created channel will be re-vegetated through the entire length. Additionally, the surrounding uplands will be planted with native species including native grass seeding and 746 woody plantings consisting of Ponderosa pine,

Knobcone pine, Foothill pine, Madrone, Manzanita, and Black oak. Measures will also be taken to control non-native invasive plant species. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of erosion control Best Management Practices (BMPs) as well as marking sensitive resource areas, including an existing wetland, with orange construction fencing.

The Applicant has applied for a Nationwide Permit No. 27 from the United States Army Corps of Engineers and a Streambed Alteration Agreement 1602 from the California Department of Fish and Game (both pending). According to the Applicant, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service has issued a “not likely to affect” sensitive and/or endangered species Biological Opinion for the proposed project.

The City of Santa Rosa, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, approved an Environmental Impact Report for the *Santa Rosa Subregional Long-Term Wastewater Project* in 1997 (SCH No. 94103069). The Audubon Staging Area Restoration Project qualifies for CEQA under the *Santa Rosa Subregional Long-Term Wastewater Project Construction Addendum – Healdsburg North and South Segments and Construction Components near Pine Flat Road* (City of Santa Rosa, 2001).

The proposed project is scheduled to begin August 2006 and end prior to 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 Michelle Jensen at (707) 576-6711 or at mjensen@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 Blvd., Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.