

August 7, 2006

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

**Sonoma County Water Agency
Cook Creek Landslide Project
Sonoma County (WDID No. 1B06081WNSO)**

On May 23, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ken Schwarz of Jones & Stokes on behalf of the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the SCWA Cook Creek Landslide Project, Sonoma County. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the state associated with Laguna de Santa Rosa Hydrologic Sub Area, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.21.

The proposed project is located in Sonoma County, on Cook Creek, APN 045-181-005 and 045-181-010, Terra Bella Vista Way, off of Petaluma Hill Road, Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California. The purpose of the project is to stabilize a landslide and install a culvert on Cook Creek to control a major source of sediment to the Cook Creek sediment basin. The project is necessary to maintain adequate sediment storage capacity at the Cook Creek sediment basin, to assist in maintaining adequate channel capacity downstream, and reduce sediment discharge to waters downstream.

The proposed project involves the use of bioengineered bank stabilization techniques. In addition, due to the steep slopes and large volumes of material, the minimum possible amount of hardscape (i.e., rip-rap keyed into the toe of the landslide) has also been integrated into the project design to provide the structural integrity needed for successful erosion control. Access improvements to address the existing destabilized bridge across the creek have been designed to serve a dual purpose of bank stabilization/erosion reduction and provide access for equipment. This will be accomplished through use of a culverted crossing that provides a physical grade control to eliminate ongoing upstream channel incision, and will also serve as a ballast to stabilize upstream areas.

Compensatory mitigation for this project includes revegetation of the riparian vegetation that is removed or disturbed. Revegetation includes: seeding with native grasses, application of erosion control fabric, and planting of graduated size native herbs, shrubs and trees. Weeding will occur at least twice a year. Watering will be weekly, or as necessary, for the first 3 years. Tree protection will be installed if necessary. Vegetation will be monitored for 3 years with 80% survival at end of monitoring period. A monitoring report will be submitted annually during the monitoring period summarizing the number of surviving plants, proposed remediation of any issues that have arisen (loss of plants, herbivory), and the overall success of the revegetation effort. Additionally, there will be a coordinated effort between the appropriate Resource Conservation District, Sonoma County Water Agency, and land owners, to collaboratively work on erosion control in the watershed.

The Sonoma County Water Agency, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined the project qualifies for Categorical Exemption, Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land, pursuant to the CEQA guidelines. The Sonoma County Water Agency has prepared a Notice of Exemption, Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land, pursuant to the CEQA guidelines (Resolution No. 05-1129-3).

The project is scheduled to 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, ending August 28, 2006. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653, or at SBargsten@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.