

October 18, 2006

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)
Pistol Creek Bridge Replacement and Channel Restoration Project
Sonoma County (WDID# 1B06085WNSO)**

On June 14, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Winzler and Kelly on behalf of Hop Kiln Winery, Vero Wine Group, LLC requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Pistol Creek Bridge Replacement and Channel Restoration Project. The proposed project causes disturbances to Waters of the State associated with Pistol Creek and the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No.114.25.

The proposed project is located on the Hop Kiln Winery property at 6050 Westside Road, Healdsburg, Sonoma County. The purpose of the project is to replace a bridge that is outdated and that has been washed out. The project will occur in two phases, this notice is for the first phase which will remove the bridge abutments and stabilize the stream bank slopes.

The proposed project consists of two phases and two sites. The first phase will take place at the downstream site and will consist of removing the existing wooden bridge and associated concrete abutments. These abutments have been destabilized due to high velocity storm flow and are now falling into Pistol Creek, blocking flow and causing bank scour. All work for the removal will be completed using heavy equipment that will be operated from top of bank. Once the bridge and abutments are removed, the banks will be stabilized using erosion control matting and plantings. The second phase will be covered by the Regional Water Board in a second permit to be issued at a later date and consists of the following: A new bridge will be constructed in the location of the old bridge. The channel under and around the bridge will be restored to a stable geometry by re-establishing a bankfull channel and over bankfull terraces. The upstream site work will consist of stabilizing an eroded bank and roughening the channel bottom. Prior to any work in the channel the project site would be cleared of salmonids and other species by a qualified fisheries biologist.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for the first phase of the project. A mitigation plan is being developed for the second phase of the project. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include revegetating soils that will be exposed during the first phase of the project. Planting for erosion control in Phase 1 will be achieved by applying either a sterile wheatgrass or Regreen to the exposed soils then covering the area with a 4-inch layer of weed free mulch. Revegetation will occur immediately after bridge removal.

The California Department of Fish and Game, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15301 – Existing Facilities, September 29, 2006, pursuant to CEQA.

The project is scheduled to begin October 2006, and end prior to October 31, 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. Under Title 23, California Code of Regulations, Section 3858(a): "The executive director or the executive officer with whom an application for certification is filed shall provide public notice of an application at least twenty-one (21) days before taking certification action on the application, unless the public notice requirement has been adequately satisfied by the applicant or federal agency. If the applicant or federal agency provides public notice, it shall be in a manner and to an extent fully equivalent to that normally provided by the certifying agency. If an emergency requires that certification be issued in less than 21 days, public notice shall be provided as much in advance of issuance as possible, but no later than simultaneously with issuance of certification."

Due to the urgent nature of this project and to avoid an emergency situation, Notice of Coverage, Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Minor Dredging and Fill Activities may be issued during the 21-day public comment period. Public comments will still be accepted and reviewed during the entire 21-day comment period; and the certification may be modified. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member John Caleb Sarsfield at (707) 576-6728 or at jsarsfield@waterboards.ca.gov or 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.