

January 4, 2007

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

**California Department of Transportation
Highway 20 Left Turn Lane and Shoulder Widening Project
Highway 20 Post Mile 0.3-2.4**

Mendocino County (WDID# 1B05159WMNE)

On December 8, 2005, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requesting Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Highway 20 Left Turn Lane and Shoulder Widening Project located near Fort Bragg, on Highway 20, Post Mile 0.3-2.4 in Mendocino County. Regional Water Board staff received additional information on December 13, 2006. The proposed project will cause disturbances to Waters of the United States associated with the Noyo Hydrologic Area No. 113.20, Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit No. 113.00.

Caltrans proposes to begin construction activities at South Harbor Lane (Post Mile 0.3) and end east of Gravel Pit Road (Post Mile 2.4). Left-turn lanes will be added at major intersections within the project limits. Intersections will be reconstructed and brought up to current standards. The existing roadway will be widened to accommodate road shoulders and pedestrian access. Existing drainages and culverts will be relocated and upgraded.

Existing culverts under the driveways will be replaced with larger 24-inch diameter culverts. Some utility poles will be relocated to the top of bank, above the five year storm flood plain. In addition, check dams will be added to the roadside drainages to reduce erosion and provide storm water treatment.

The proposed project will result in permanent impacts to 0.22 acres and temporary impacts to 0.016 acres of seasonal wetlands and drainages.

An adequate mitigation plan to address impacts to Waters of the United States and Waters of the State was not submitted with the application. The Regional Water Board requires submittal of an adequate mitigation plan with the application, but Caltrans has requested to receive the Water Quality Certification as soon as possible for safety concerns and to protect project funding. As the mitigation plan will not be approved before staff proposes to issue the Water Quality Certification, Caltrans will be required to submit a mitigation plan for Regional Water Board approval within six months. Caltrans will also be required to complete a higher ratio of mitigation to compensate for temporal losses based on when the approved mitigation project is completed. The mitigation plan will be noticed for public comment after it has been submitted to the Regional Water Board.

Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of erosion and sediment control Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Caltrans has prepared a negative declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

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 at 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 Blvd., Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.

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