

January 29, 2007

Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)
Manchester Ridge Timberland Conversion (THP 1-040012 MEN)
Mendocino County (WDID# 1B06182WNME)

On December 5, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Jeff Longcrier – Forester, on behalf of Manchester Ridge LLC (Applicant), requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Manchester Ridge Timberland Conversion Project in Mendocino County. The proposed project causes disturbances to Waters of the United States and State associated with the Lower Alder Creek Hydrologic Sub Area No.113.63, Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit No.113.00.

The proposed project is located on the Mendocino coast, on a private dirt road off of Mountain View Road, approximately 11.5 miles east of Highway 1, east of the town of Manchester, at an elevation of approximately 2,000 feet. The assessor parcel number (APN) is 132-260-03. The purpose of the project is to address three sedimentation reduction structures. These structures were previously installed in 2002, and this is a proposed after-the-fact Dredge/Fill Projects permit. This is part of a conversion project, from timber land to vineyard. This proposed Dredge/Fill Project permit is only for the three sedimentation structures and does not address the remaining proposed timberland to vineyard conversion, which is under oversight of the California Department of Forestry and the timber division of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The project consisted of installation of three erosion control structures on an unnamed watercourse that is tributary to Alder Creek. The structures act to capture sediment from upslope vineyards and roads. The lower structure consists of a truck road crossing with a 48" pipe installed approximately 3' high in the road fill. Both the inlet and outlet sides of the fill have been reinforced with rock rip rap and concrete. The area between the bottom of the stream channel and the pipe acts as a sediment basin. The middle structure is a small silt pond approximately 10 feet wide by 10 long created by placing a 3 to 4 foot high rock rip rap and concrete dam in the channel. The upper structure is a detention basin constructed in the swale above the top of the watercourse in question. The detention basin has been constructed by placing rock rip rap, soil and wooden planks across the swale. This structure is approximately 3 feet high by 10 feet wide and has created a detention basin 20 feet wide by 100 feet long. The total impact to waters of the state is approximately 500 square feet. Since the time the project was constructed, all of the disturbed soil has been revegetated.

In general, a project done without a permit would require additional mitigation to account for the violation. However, this project is considered to be self mitigating

due to its benefit to water quality by removing sediment from potentially entering Alder Creek. Maintenance of the structures to remove sediment and debris shall be conducted as needed. Revegetation of the structures shall be done if necessary after maintenance activities.

The remainder of the work to be completed for the timber to vineyard conversion has regulatory oversight by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) and through the California Department of Forestry. Non-compensatory mitigation will be achieved through the use of temporary silt control barriers, seeding and mulching as necessary, and other appropriate measures to minimize the risk of soil transport to downstream areas. Methods are described in the submitted erosion control plan.

The California Department of Forestry, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has filed an Initial Notice of Exemption and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration.

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 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.