

September 10, 2007

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

Redwood Community Action Agency – Widow White Creek Biotechnical Bank  
Stabilization and Stream Enhancement Project  
WDID No. 1B07121WNHU

Humboldt County

On August 3, 2007 the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Don Allan, representing Natural Resources Services, Redwood Community Action Agency (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to a bank stabilization and stream habitat enhancement project on Widow White Creek in McKinleyville. Widow White Creek is in a coastal watershed that drains an approximately five square mile area. Widow White Creek supports coho salmon, steelhead trout, and cutthroat trout, and may support chinook salmon. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Widow White Creek in the Blue Lake Hydrologic Area No. 109.10.

The proposed project is located on the north bank of Widow White Creek approximately 1,000 west (downstream) of Highway 101 on property owned by Bud and Diane Slagle (AP#511-011-019). Stream bank erosion and wind storms in the winter of 2006-2007 resulted in the loss of mature spruce trees, alders, and willows within the riparian corridor along 185 feet of Widow White Creek in the project area. Stream bank erosion has reduced the area of the terrace on which the Widow White Creek Interpretive Trail (part of the Hammond Coastal Trail) will be located to the extent that additional stream bank erosion could result in erosion of the trail corridor. The proposed project involves streambank stabilization and riparian habitat enhancement activities intended to prevent the creek from eroding more of the streambank and the adjacent trail easement while also enhancing the channel and riparian habitat. The proposed project is also intended to prevent additional adverse impacts downstream of the project area by preventing additional fine sediment from entering the creek channel.

Two cofferdams will be installed in the creek channel to dewater the upstream section of the project area. The cofferdams will consist of sandbags covered in plastic. Water will be piped around the work area using a 24 inch diameter gravity pipe. The pipe inlet will be located between the upstream cofferdam and a fish screen and the outlet will be located between the downstream cofferdam and a fish screen. The upstream dam will prevent stream flows from entering the construction area and the downstream dam will prevent the piped water from back flowing into the work area.

An excavator will be used to excavate a two foot deep toe trench along the streambank, excavate the streambank to reduce the slope of the bank to be between 1:1 (horizontal to vertical) and 1.5:1, install rock slope protection (RSP), and to remove fallen trees/logs that will be used in the project to create fish habitat structures. The excavator will place two-ton boulder riprap into the toe trench and onto the streambank. One quarter-ton to one half-ton rock and the materials removed during the streambank contouring will be used to fill in behind the two-ton rock and armor the streambank to a height of six to eight vertical feet above the low flow water surface. Smaller rock will be used to fill the voids between the larger boulders to prevent piping of fine sediment from the streambank. Live stake willow cuttings will be planted between the individual boulders in the RSP to restore the riparian willows that were removed by the bank erosion. Shore pine, Sitka spruce, and native shrubs will be planted on the terrace adjacent to the creek to restore a multi-storied riparian forest.

Four fish habitat cover structures will be inserted into the stabilized streambank area at roughly 30 foot intervals to enhance pool scour and provide cover for fish and other aquatic organisms. Each of the habitat structures will consist of two 16 feet long by 18 to 24 inch diameter logs. The logs are located onsite and outside the wetted channel and currently do not provide habitat for fish. The logs will be secured by the new RSP and will provide fish habitat during summer low flows and resting areas for migrating salmonids. The logs will be installed using techniques from the Department of Fish and Game's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual.

Excavation of the streambank and installation of RSP, log habitat structures, and riparian plantings will result in permanent impacts to 185 linear feet and 2220 square feet (0.05 acre) of streambank. Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed project. Noncompensatory mitigation for this project includes seeding and mulching disturbed areas with erosion control mix and sterilized rice straw. Noncompensatory mitigation for this project also includes the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control and the operation of heavy equipment in a waterway. The proposed project is scheduled for the summer 2007 when flows in the creek are low. Construction activities are expected to take seven days to complete.

The applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit Number 13, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Humboldt County Department of Public Works prepared a Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2007072037) for the proposed project in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment. The applicant has applied to CDF&G for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed road widening activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed project

including maps and design drawings. The application and Regional Water Board file are available for public review.

Regional Water Board staff are 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 submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

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