

June 13, 2008

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

Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works,
Roadside Ditch Work-Variou Locations Project
WDID# 1B07176WNSO

Sonoma County

On December 6, 2007, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Rich Stabler and Laura Peltz, on behalf of the Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works, requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Roadside Ditch Work-Variou Locations (Project) located in Sonoma County. The proposed Project causes temporary impacts to 0.173 acres of ephemeral stream bank, within the Russian River, Guerneville Hydrologic Sub Unit No. 114.11.

The Project is located in various locations in western Sonoma County, California. Work was done with prior approval from Water Board staff in order to complete work in advance of the wet season. Location 1 is on Bohemian Highway, Post Mile 12.47, south of Occidental, 38°24'11" N and -122°56'42" W. Location 2 is on Graton Road, 120 feet westerly of Atascadero Creek, south side of road, near Graton, 38°25'27" N and -122°51'39" W. Location 3 is at 8490 Occidental Road, north side of road near Peachland Drive, northwest of Sebastopol, 38°25'20" N and -122°52'20" W. Location 4 is on Bloomfield Road near Blucher Valley Road, south of Sebastopol, 38°21'0" N and -122°49'24" W. The purpose of the Project is to restore capacity in the roadside ditches for stormwater and minimize roadway flood potential.

Location 1: Bohemian Highway at PM 12.47

The project location consists of a roadside ditch at the base of a slide with a year-around seep. Sediment removal maintenance has been performed in the past at this ditch. Road maintenance crews used a backhoe excavator to remove sediment from the ditch, which is 284 ft long, approximately 3 ft wide, and is now (after the project) about 1 ft deep. Straw wattles were staked across the ditch at 30-ft intervals to remove sediment. Adjacent to the ditch, white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*) colonizing the edge and up-slope were left undisturbed. The excavation was shallow and did not sever any alder roots. The ditch will quickly reestablish upright plants from the underground rhizomes, tubers, and roots. The straw wattles will be left in the ditch through the rainy season to control sediment.

Location 2: Graton Road about 120-ft westerly of Atascadero Creek near Dyer Road

The existing ditch, located on the southerly side of the road was about 3 ft wide and varies from 6-8 inches deep. The work included using a backhoe excavator to excavate about 80 ft of ditch to a depth of 1 ft. Fiber roll check dams were placed in the excavated ditch to contain sediment. Willows (*Salix sp.*) were trimmed but not removed. The fiber rolls will be left in place until vegetation reestablishes itself.

Location 3: Occidental Road at 8490 on the northerly side near the intersection with Peachland Drive

This roadside ditch is about 1 ft deep and about 3 ft wide. The ditch currently has no surface water but is saturated in some areas. Broad cattails (*Typha latifolia*) is common and characterizes the site as being very wet most of the year. Approximately 1200 ft of ditch was excavated to a depth of about 2 ft (with no widening) in an effort to add capacity to the ditch and aid in flow. Fiber roll checkdams were placed in 30-ft intervals to control potential sediment. An erosion control mix was applied by hand to the edges of the ditch.

Location 4: Bloomfield Road near Blucher Valley Road

The existing ditch was about 1 ft deep and 3.5 ft wide. The project excavated the ditch to an overall depth of 3 ft and a width of 3.5 ft for a distance of about 800 ft. Bare soils were hand seeded and fiber roll check dams were installed to mitigate for potential sediment migration.

At a minimum, the following construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) were incorporated into the final Project plans in order to reduce and control soil erosion: work in and around waterways were conducted as late in the year as possible to avoid dewatering activities; installation of construction barrier fencing to preclude equipment entry into sensitive areas; installation of silt fencing or fiber rolls to prevent sediment loss from immediate work area; topsoil salvage and reapplication; and seeding and mulching. Additionally, all required BMPs were on-site and ready for timely deployment, before start of construction activities.

Temporary impacts to waters of the state will be compensated for by restoration/rehabilitation of other areas to be determined within Sonoma County.

The Sonoma County Department of Transportation & Public Works, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15301 – Existing Facilities, September 20, 2007, pursuant to CEQA.

The Project began in September and ended in October, 2007. 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 posting of this notice.

This is a brief summary of this project; all 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.