

July 2, 2009

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

Humboldt County Department of Public Works – Cook Bar Gravel Extraction, North Fork
Mattole River
WDID 1B09049WNHU

Humboldt County

On April 17, 2009, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ann Glubczynski, representing Humboldt County Department of Public Works (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for sand and gravel extraction activities at the Cook Bar on the North Fork Mattole River. The proposed aggregate extraction operations will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the North Fork Mattole River in the Mattole River Hydrologic Area No. 112.30.

The proposed project involves extraction of gravel from the Cook Bar for use in County road maintenance activities. The Cook Bar is located on the North Fork Mattole River at its confluence with the mainstem Mattole River, approximately 0.5 miles south of Petrolia off Clark Ranch Road. Proposed aggregate extraction activities will be regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (File No. 2007-00857) Letter of Permission procedure (LOP 2009), pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. Activities authorized by LOP 2009 include, but are not limited to, sand and gravel mining and work associated with these activities, stockpiling of gravel in a dry section of the stream, associated salmonid habitat improvement activities, and construction of road crossings.

The Applicant previously conducted gravel extraction activities at this site in 1999. The 1999 activities included two extraction areas, one on each side of the North Fork Mattole River. Permanent monitoring cross-sections have been surveyed annually since they were established in 1996.

Proposed activities involve extraction of up to 34,000 cubic yards of gravel from the Cook Bar every three years for the next five years. Extraction activities may occur annually; however, the total volume extracted over any three consecutive years shall not exceed 34,000 cubic yards. Up to 15 acres of the gravel bar may be temporarily impacted by proposed activities.

Narrow skimming is the preferred gravel extraction method for this bar based on County of Humboldt Extraction Review Team (CHERT) recommendations. Other extraction methods that may be used for this bar include trenching, traditional skim, horseshoe skim, alcove, and wetlands pit methods. The actual volume, location, and extraction method will be determined annually using the recommendations made by CHERT and other regulatory agencies.

Equipment used for gravel extraction will consist of bulldozers, excavators, front-end loaders, and dump trucks. The gravel bar will be accessed using existing designated

haul roads and the shortest route on the gravel bar from the haul road to the extraction area. Existing haul roads are from Clark Ranch Road on the west side of the channel and Old Coast Wagon Road on the east side of the channel. Working within the pre-set cut stakes, the bulldozer or excavator will remove gravel from the extraction area and create temporary stockpiles on the gravel bar. The front-end loader will transport the gravel to the crusher which will be located on the bar adjacent to the extraction area.

A portable crusher assembly, consisting of jaw and cone crushers, conveyors, and a generator, will be temporarily located on the gravel bar. Crushed rock will be transported via dump trucks to various offsite stockpile and storage areas. The crusher will be dismantled and removed from the gravel bar following completion of crushing activities.

Proposed gravel extraction and processing activities will be limited to the period between September 15 and November 1 to avoid the western snowy plover nesting period. Annual extraction activities will take approximately four weeks to complete. After extraction activities are complete, the extraction and processing areas will be graded to fill depressions and drain freely. Temporary stockpiles will be removed from the gravel bar, haul roads will be scarified to reduce compaction, and post-extraction cross-sections will be surveyed.

The Humboldt County Planning Division prepared a mitigated negative declaration (MND) for this project order to comply with CEQA and submitted the environmental document to the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2009062078) on June 22, 2009. The public review period for the MND began June 22, 2009 and ends on July 21, 2009. Questions and comments related to the MND should be directed to the Humboldt County Planning Division. 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 for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed project including maps and photos. 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. This project is likely to be eligible for coverage under the *General Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Quality Certification for Discharges Related to Sand and Gravel Mining, Excavation, and Processing Activities, Including Asphalt and Concrete Operations, on Non-Federal Lands in the North Coast Region* (Order No. R1-2005-0011) that was adopted by the Regional Water Board on June 21, 2005. 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 Regional Water Board staff Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

070209_DLP_humco_cookbargravel_pubnot.doc