

July 22, 2009

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

Mendocino County Department of Transportation, Gualala Road MP 1.65
Storm Damage Project
WDID No. 1B06154WNME

Mendocino County

On October 5, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Ole Wik of the County of Mendocino Department of Transportation (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities associated with a bank stabilization project on the western bank of the Gualala River. The project involves repairing an eroding bank that was damaged in the 2005-2006 winter storms, using bank armoring for reinforcement and stabilization. The project is located near Gualala Road, M.P. 1.65, east by northeast of the Town of Gualala, latitude 38.77695° N, longitude 123.49987° W, Mendocino County. The project permanently impacts approximately 0.02 acres of waters of the State associated with the Gualala River in the Gualala Hydrologic Subarea No. 113.85, Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Area 113.00.

The purpose of the proposed project is to reinforce a damaged embankment and prevent continued erosion, which threatens the roadway and delivers sediment into the river.

The Applicant proposes to conduct repairs during the dry season when the active riverbed will be approximately 35 feet from the repair site. Flood debris, such as limbs and fallen trees, will be cleared from the area and the shoulder of the roadway will be reestablished to a minimum of three feet wide. An approximately four feet deep by four feet wide by 100 feet long footing trench will be constructed at the toe of the slope and geotextile underlayment will be placed in the trench and up the slope. The footing will be filled with one ton rip rap and loosely fitted one half ton rip rap will be installed from the footing up to the top of the bank, leaving ample interstices to allow for successful propagation of larger tree species. Soil will also be placed in the interstices to further encourage tree propagation.

Compensatory mitigation will consist of riparian habitat improvements. The Applicant proposes for each 100 square feet of placed rock to plant one native tree, such as California bay-laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), red alder (*Alnus rubra*), Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsunga manziesii*), and/or willows appropriate for coastal use (*Salix lucida*). Based on observations of an adjacent previous repair site, future establishment of other native trees and shrubs by natural propagation is expected.

All plantings shall be irrigated and managed as necessary for a minimum of 5 consecutive years immediately following planting. Planted vegetation shall have at least an 85% survival rate of thriving planted species at the end of five years. Annual reports shall be submitted to the Regional Water Board for five years, and shall include photos

of the revegetated areas, and include survival rates and a narrative summary of the status of the revegetation/mitigation effort.

Ground disturbance will be limited to the minimum necessary and all disturbed ground will be treated with erosion control measures. All construction activities shall occur during the dry season and all Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be utilized to limit delivery of sediment into the river. Additionally, all required BMPs shall be on-site and ready for timely deployment before the start of construction activities.

The County of Mendocino Department of Transportation, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, submitted a Notice of Exemption to the State Clearinghouse on September 20, 2006, pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game for a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement.

Applicant has applied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, however the Corps has decided that the Project is outside of their jurisdiction, and will not be issuing a permit for the Project.

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