March 17, 2010

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

Chevron – Eureka Terminal Maintenance Dredging
WDID No. 1B04054WNHU

Humboldt County

On December 31, 2009, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Chevron Products Company (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to maintenance dredging at the Chevron Eureka Terminal located on Humboldt Bay. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Humboldt Bay in the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00.

The Chevron Marine Terminal facility operates a tee-shaped pier and dock that provides a platform for off loading petroleum from barges. The pier extends approximately 645 feet from the shoreline and supports pipelines that transport petroleum products from the pier to the adjacent upland tank farm located at 3400 Christie Street, Eureka. The proposed project involves dredging to remove accumulated sediment from an area adjacent to the pier.

The deep water channel of Humboldt Bay is periodically dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to allow ships and barges to enter and navigate the bay. Chevron's pier is outside the deep water channel and Chevron is responsible for routine maintenance dredging adjacent to the pier to ensure continued safety of their ongoing operations. The applicant conducts similar maintenance dredging activities every several years depending on the rate of sedimentation. Water quality certification was issued on July 8, 2004, authorizing the applicant's most recent maintenance dredging event.

The proposed project involves dredging to remove sediment that has accumulated at the end of the pier since their last maintenance dredging event. The proposed project involves removal of approximately 2,300 cubic yards of sediment using a crane with a clamshell bucket operating on the deck of a barge. Dredged sediment will be placed on a barge with a K-rail barrier placed around the barge's perimeter. The sediment will dewater on the barge with the runoff draining back to the bay through the slots in the bottom of the K-rails. The barges carrying dewatered sediment will be hauled to an offloading terminal along the margin of Humboldt Bay. The dredged material will be directly off loaded into trucks for transport to an appropriately permitted upland disposal site.

There are currently no appropriately permitted disposal sites in the Humboldt Bay area. A potential site for disposal of the dredged material includes a formerly used dredged material disposal site located on the Samoa Peninsula near the west end of the Highway 255 bridge over Humboldt Bay. The Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and

Conservation District (HBHRCD) is planning to apply for the necessary permits and authorizations to use the site for disposal of dredged material generated by similar small dredging projects around Humboldt Bay. If the HBHRCD's proposed upland disposal site on the Samoa Peninsula is not permitted within the applicant's dredging project timeline, the dredged material generated during this project will be hauled to a currently permitted facility such as a solid waste landfill in Anderson, California or Medford, Oregon.

Sediment in the proposed dredge area has been sampled and characterized for potential contamination. A composite sediment sample was analyzed for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbon (PAHs), metals (cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, and zinc), pentachlorophenol, dioxins/furans, and petroleum hydrocarbons as gas, diesel and motor oil. Analysis of the sediment sample confirmed the presence of PAH constituents, dioxins, and metals. Metals concentrations appear to be within the range of background concentrations for Humboldt Bay sediments. The concentration of individual PAH constituents in the sample were also low. The total PAH concentration was less then 1 part-per-million. The total TEQ concentration of dioxin was 0.16 part-per-trillion. PCBs, pentachlorophenol, gasoline, diesel, and motor oil were not detected in the composite sediment sample. Based on the sample results this material is suitable for dredging as proposed and disposal at an authorized upland disposal facility that is in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements.

The dredging project is planned to take place in late summer or fall of 2011 and is expected to take 20 days to complete. The total area affected by the dredging project is 0.36 acre. Compensatory mitigation is not required for this project. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control, and fuel handling activities.

The applicant has applied (File No. 2010-00016N) for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Letter of Permission, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (1600 Permit) from the California Department of Fish and Game is not required for this project. On February 25, 2010, the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2004012096) for the project in order to comply with CEQA. 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.

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.