

June 10, 2010

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

Pacific Gas and Electric
Farmer's Lane Bridge Project
WDID No. 1B09120WNSO

Sonoma County

On October 5, 2009, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Patricia Sanchez of Pacific Gas and Electric (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for the Farmer's Lane Bridge Project (Project), located in Sonoma County. The Project is located at Farmers Lane, Fourth Street and Montgomery Drive, in the City of Santa Rosa, latitude 38.449190° N and longitude 122.688519° W. The Project involves removal and replacement of deteriorated protective pipe coating on a pipeline. The proposed Project will cause temporary impacts to approximately 0.05 acres of waters of the State associated with Santa Rosa Creek in the Santa Rosa Hydrologic Sub Area No. 114.22, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The purpose of the project is to maintain the integrity of a four-inch, natural gas pipeline, suspended under the Farmers Lane Bridge. This pipeline is a source of natural gas to the State of California and serves the geographic area of Santa Rosa. The Applicant believes that the repair of this facility must be completed before the onset of the 2010 rainy season, in order to insure an uninterrupted energy supply and to protect the safety of the public.

The Applicant proposes to install approximately 16, 14 by 14 inch wood plates on the creek bed. The plates will provide a stable footing for temporary scaffolding used to make the necessary repairs. The repair will also require minor cuts into an existing footpath on the banks to construct steps and allow safe access to the creek bed. A 6-mil poly sheet will be installed over and around the scaffolding to prevent the proposed protective coatings from entering the stream bed and will be swept daily to prevent any materials from entering the creek bed. The existing lead-based protective pipe coating will be removed by hand using metal scrapers and wire brushes, and the new epoxy coating will be applied over the pipeline by hand, with paintbrushes. A 60 by 100 foot staging area will be set up in a vacant field west of Farmers Lane and just south of the project site. Access between the staging area and project site will be via an established footpath. Upon completion of the repair work, the scaffolding, plastic sheeting, and steel plates will be removed from the project site. The proposed project will not impact any vegetation, but should unintentional impacts occur, a Bank Restoration Plan, which will mitigate for these impacts, will be implemented.

Compensatory mitigation will consist of riparian habitat improvements. The access path on the creek bank will be returned to its original slope, and the area will be seeded with native grasses.

If riparian restoration is necessary, all plantings shall be irrigated and managed 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 hydro-mulching, seeding or other erosion control measures. Silt fences, silt curtains and straw bales will be used to avoid delivery of sediment into sensitive areas during construction. All operations will be done with respect to all wildlife and to cause the minimum of disruption necessary. All erosion control measures will be installed and in place by October 15 and maintained thereafter by the contractor. Additionally, all required Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be on-site and ready for timely deployment before the start of construction activities.

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined this project to be Categorical Exempt under Section 15301 (b) – Existing Facilities and will submit a Notice of Exemption to the State Clearinghouse, pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

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

The Applicant anticipates receiving notification from the US Army Corps of Engineers that the project will not need a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit.

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.