

January 27, 2011

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

Santa Rosa City Schools,
Broadmoor North Mitigation Site
WDID No. 1B10064WNSO

Sonoma County

On June 07, 2010, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Laurence P. Stromberg, Ph.D., on behalf of Santa Rosa City Schools (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, water quality certification for proposed activities associated with the Santa Rosa City Schools, Broadmoor North Mitigation Site (BNMS) (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to approximately 0.097 acres of waters of the United States and waters of the State associated with a seasonal wetland within the Laguna Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.21, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The proposed project is mitigation for impacts on 1.65 acres of seasonal wetland (vernal swale) habitat at Elsie Allen High School (constructed in 1994). The site at which the wetland impacts at the Elsie Allen High School will be mitigated is the BNMS, known previously as the Broadmoor Acres No. 4 site. BNMS comprises two parcels (APNs: 035-211-023 and 035-221-008) of approximately 14 acres, southwest of the City of Santa Rosa, approximately one mile west of Elsie Allen High School, latitude 38.408910°N and longitude 122.75384°W.

The primary objective of the proposed project is to fulfill the obligation to mitigate for the impacts on 1.65 acres of wetland habitat at Elsie Allen High School; approximately 1.48 acres of vernal pool habitat would be enhanced and created on the BNMS. Of this total, approximately 1.38 acres will be created habitat. Approximately 0.36 acres would be enhanced. Allowing partial credit for enhancing function and value of the existing wetlands, the enhancement would contribute an additional 0.10 acres of wetland credit to the creation, yielding a total of 1.48 acres. The hydrologic function of the existing vernal pool habitat will either remain unchanged or be improved. The project site is adjacent to an existing mitigation area, the FEMA Mitigation Site, which enhances the habitat value of the project. Additionally, enhancement and creation of wetland area will yield between one and two acres of Sebastopol meadowfoam habitat. The project also includes preservation and enhancement of a California tiger salamander breeding pool.

Documentation provided with the 401 Application states that the proposed action at the BNMS will be both self-mitigating and have a beneficial effect. Creation and enhancement of 1.48 acres of vernal pool and connecting swale habitat will increase the acreage of wetlands at the site and provide undisturbed, potentially occupiable habitat for Sebastopol meadowfoam.

At a minimum, the following construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be incorporated into the final project plans as appropriate in order to reduce and control impacts to wetlands and to control soil erosion: An approved Storm Water Pollution

Prevention Plan will be implemented during construction and will include the use of silt fencing and wattles and other features to prevent soil movement off site; all wetland construction will be conducted under the supervision of the wetland specialist. During wetland construction, straw bales or silt fences will be placed between each wetland construction site and existing wetlands when and where either is necessary to prevent impacts; topsoil salvage and reapplication; and seeding and mulching.

Santa Rosa City Schools will dedicate fee title to the 14-acre BNMS to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). The CDFG has agreed to manage the site following fee title dedication and receipt of an agreed-upon management endowment.

Performance criteria and monitoring progress will be assessed against performance criteria over a five-year monitoring period for wetlands and endangered plant species as outlined in *Wetland Mitigation Plan, Broadmoor North Mitigation Site, City of Santa Rosa, California*, dated April 3, 2010.

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for authorization to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act section 404. The applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement

The project is exempt from CEQA under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061, subdivision (b). The project meets the exemption criteria under title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15304 (d) [Minor Alteration to Land]; including minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas which result in improvement of habitat for wildlife resources; The Regional Water Board will file a Notice of Exemption in accordance with the California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15062 after issuance of the 401 Certification order.

The information contained in this public notice is a preliminary assessment and summary of the applicant's proposed activities additional information and project requirements may be implemented when the permits from other regulatory agencies are received and reviewed by Regional Water Board staff. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed activities including maps and detailed design drawings. 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. 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 Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.