

May 12, 2011

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

Trinity Co. DPW – Halls Gulch Bridge Replacement
WDID No. 1A10126WNTR

Trinity County

On December 15, 2010, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Trinity County Department of Transportation (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, water quality certification for proposed activities associated with removal and replacement of the bridge on East Fork Road over Halls Gulch. On March 15, 2011, Regional Water Board staff sent a letter to the applicant requesting additional information. The Regional Water Board received the additional requested information on April 12, 2011. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Halls Gulch and East Fork Trinity River in the Upper Trinity River Hydrologic Area No. 106.40.

The proposed project involves construction of a new bridge over Halls Gulch slightly downstream of the existing bridge and realignment of East Fork Road onto the new bridge. The existing bridge is a 54-foot long and 14-foot wide, single-lane, single-span, railroad car frame with a reinforced concrete deck. The existing bridge was determined by Caltrans to be functionally obsolete and structurally deficient. The proposed new bridge will consist of an 80-foot long and 24-foot wide, 2-lane, single-span, cast-in-place, post-tensioned concrete slab structure. The new bridge will rest on cast-in-place concrete abutments on spread footings. There will be no piers in the Halls Gulch channel.

A temporary traffic detour will be constructed across Halls Gulch slightly downstream of the proposed bridge. The temporary traffic detour will consist of culverts and clean washed gravel backfill placed in the Halls Gulch channel. After the traffic detour is in place the existing bridge will be removed. The old bridge abutments and footings will be excavated and excess earthen materials will likely be used for roadway embankment. The old bridge materials, concrete, and rebar will be disposed of at an appropriate offsite disposal facility. Construction of the new bridge will commence following removal of the existing bridge.

The proposed project is anticipated to require installation of a flow diversion pipe within a 150-foot long reach of Halls Gulch through the project area. Culverts will be placed within Halls Gulch from the upstream end of the existing bridge to the confluence with the East Fork Trinity River. Clean gravels and plastic sheeting would be used to divert flows into the diversion culverts. The temporary detour crossing will be placed within the same dewatered area. The proposed Halls Gulch diversion and temporary detour crossing will result in 150 linear feet and 3,473 square feet of temporary impacts to Halls Gulch stream channel. The proposed Halls Gulch diversion and temporary detour crossing will also result in temporary impacts to 0.029 acre (1,265 square feet) of riparian wetland.

East Fork Trinity River meanders within a braided channel above and below the confluence with Halls Gulch. The low-flow river channel is directly adjacent to the existing rock slope protection (RSP) embankment along East Fork Road. Proposed activities include installation of temporary diversion dams in East Fork Trinity River to dewater the low-flow channel and allow for installation of additional RSP along East Fork Road. Proposed RSP would result in permanent impacts to 300 linear feet of the East Fork Trinity River low-flow channel and streambank upstream of Halls Gulch. The purpose of the RSP is to protect the existing and realigned section of roadway from scour. A 10-foot wide flat apron of RSP would be placed within the low-flow channel at the base of the existing RSP and additional RSP would be placed to create a one-to-one RSP slope extending from the apron to the shoulder of East Fork Road. Voids in the large RSP will be filled with soil and planted with willow cuttings and cottonwood seedlings. Proposed RSP in East Fork Trinity River will result in permanent impacts to 300 linear feet and 2,350 square feet of East Fork Trinity River streambank and 342 square feet of riparian wetland. RSP is also proposed along the embankments of the proposed new bridge. RSP placed in the new bridge area will occur in areas currently occupied by the existing bridge abutments and will also result in permanent impacts to 265 square feet of riparian wetlands along the Halls Gulch streambank.

In order to install the RSP in East Fork Trinity River, flows in the low-flow river channel will be diverted away from the road. A 380-foot long and approximately 8-foot wide temporary diversion channel will be excavated through the streambed approximately 60 to 140 feet west of the existing low flow channel to divert summer flows away from the roadway. Sediment and rock excavated from the diversion channel will be side-cast within a 29-foot wide corridor that includes the excavated diversion channel. The side-cast material will be used to fill the temporary channel prior to completion of the project. A temporary diversion dam will be placed across the existing low-flow channel at the upstream end of the proposed RSP area to divert flows into the excavated diversion channel. The temporary diversion dam will consist of K-rail supported with native rock and plastic sheeting. Once the proposed RSP area is dewatered, a temporary dam may be installed across the main river channel at the downstream end of the diversion channel to prevent backwater from encroaching into the dewatered area. Proposed activities associated with diversion and dewatering of East Fork Trinity River will result in 380 linear feet and 19,605 square feet of temporary impacts to the East Fork Trinity River streambed.

The applicant has applied (2008-00463) for authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The applicant has also applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (1600-2010-0404-R1) from the California Department of Fish and Game. On February 17, 2010, Trinity County approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2009122068) 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. The applicant is required to implement a Riparian Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to provide mitigation for impacts to existing riparian wetlands and riparian vegetation.

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 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 Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.