

June 16, 2011

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

US Coast Guard TRACEN Petaluma Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade
WDID No. 1B11073WNSO

Sonoma County

On May 26, 2011, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Carrie Lukacic, of Winzler & Kelly, on behalf of United States of America in the Person of the U.S. Coast Guard, Training Center Petaluma (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, water quality certification for proposed activities associated with the U.S. Coast Guard TRACEN Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade Project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States and waters of the State associated with seasonal wetlands and an unnamed tributary (referred to as drainage channel) to Stemple Creek within the Estero San Antonio Hydrologic Subarea No. 115.40, Bodega Hydrologic Unit No. 115.00.

The proposed project is located at 599 Tomales Road, at the U.S. Coast Guard Training Facility (TRACEN Petaluma), located near the unincorporated community of Two Rock, approximately 7 miles northwest of the City of Petaluma; the property is bisected by the Sonoma-Marin county line. TRACEN Petaluma occupies 804 acres, however, the central core of training, administrative, and support facilities are clustered near the center of the site on approximately 110 acres. The eastern and western areas of the property are largely undeveloped and leased to a local farmer for hay production. The site is bounded on the north by Tomales Road and a segment of Valley Ford Road, and on the east by Spring Hill Road, latitude 38.25106°N, longitude 122.78621°W.

The proposed project is to replace the existing wastewater facility (WWF) at TRACEN Petaluma to expand treatment, storage, and irrigation capacity at the site. The WWF is currently regulated under Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 85-162 adopted by the Regional Water Board. The WDRs will be revised in the near future to reflect the new WWF and associated requirements and will be noticed separately from this water quality certification. The current storage and irrigation capacity for treated effluent is insufficient and has led to violations of the operating permit's waste discharge requirements (WDR). Additionally, the Regional Water Board adopted a Cease and Desist Order (No. 98-33) on March 26, 1998, for observed discharges to Stemple Creek resulting from irrigation that occurred when soils were saturated during the winter months.

The purpose of the project is to increase the storage and disposal capacity at the site to ensure that the conditions that contribute to the ongoing violations are corrected and the Cease and Desist Order can be repealed. The proposed project includes the following components: construction of a wastewater treatment facility with all of the supporting infrastructure; new and expanded storage ponds to accommodate 215-acre feet of seasonal storage; removal of an existing 72-inch culvert from the drainage channel;

construction of a new bridge across the drainage channel; installation of an agricultural irrigation system, and a new landscape irrigation system. Upgrade and expansion will occur in 2 phases; during project construction, wastewater treatment will be through existing treatment facilities. Following construction of the new treatment plant, the applicant will take partial beneficial occupancy and the wastewater treatment stream will be switched to the new facilities. Existing facilities will then be demolished. Proposed construction is estimated to begin approximately April 1, 2012 and expected completion date is October 30, 2013.

The proposed project will result in temporary impacts to 1.07 acres of wetland and 80 linear feet of bed and bank, associated with the unnamed tributary to Stemple Creek (referred to as drainage channel). The proposed project will permanently impact 0.95 acres of wetlands.

Compensatory mitigation includes on-site and in-kind wetland mitigation at a 1:1 ratio. The on-site drainage channel will be restored with native trees and grasses to off-set project impacts to waters and wetlands. Mitigation areas will be monitored for function and value, will have performance criteria, and will require monitoring and annual reporting for at least five years or until criteria have been met. Wetland mitigation areas will be protected in perpetuity by a legal instrument, such as a deed restriction. In addition, the project will utilize Low Impact Development practices to treat and retain storm water runoff on the project site.

Non-compensatory mitigation for this project includes re-vegetation of disturbed areas, as appropriate, and the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control, and for heavy equipment use near a waterway.

In channel work will be conducted between June 15 and October 31. If any streamflow or ponding in the channel are encountered, a dewatering approach will be taken, such as the installation of a sequential coffer dam system to intercept and divert surface water or intercepted shallow groundwater moving through near surface sediments. If needed, the dewatering would be accomplished by installing temporary coffer dams/sumps at the upstream end of the project, and pumping or using gravity flow piping of any nuisance water around the worksite to re-enter the channel below the downstream end of the project. Large sediment filtering bags will be incorporated into the outlet end of the discharge line to minimize turbidity. The dewatering system will be removed following project completion.

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. On May 15, 2008, the U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Joint Document comprised of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Environmental Assessment with the State Clearinghouse (State Clearinghouse No. 2008044001) for the project in order to comply with National Environmental Policy Act and the California

Environmental Quality Act. 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 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 Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

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