

June 24, 2011

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

Sonoma County Regional Parks,
Riverfront Park Trail Repair
(WDID No. 1B11064WNSO)
Sonoma County

On May 9, 2011, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Kathie Lowrey, of Prunuske Chatham, Inc., on behalf of the Sonoma County Regional Parks (SCRP), requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the SCRП Riverfront Park Trail Repair Project, located in Sonoma County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the State and waters of the United States associated with the Russian River Hydrologic Unit 114.00, Guerneville Hydrologic Sub Unit No. 114.11.

The entrance to Riverfront Park is located at 7821 Eastside Road in the unincorporated area between Healdsburg and Windsor. The center of the proposed project site is at latitude 38.51398° N and longitude 122.86705° W. Riverfront Park is comprised of Lakes Wilson and Benoist which are two of three reclaimed, terrace gravel mine pits purchased by Sonoma County as part of the Riverfront Park Project. The Lakes occupy land adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Russian River within the 100 year Flood Plain. A hydrologic connection exists between the Lakes and the River.

The purpose of the proposed project is to repair park amenities and to implement trail improvements to reduce erosion and future trail flooding. The project is included in the Governor's Office of Emergency Services Declaration and is being funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for damages sustained during 2005-06 winter storm events.

Multiple restoration and improvement activities are planned for the Riverfront Park Facility as proposed in the *Riverfront Regional Park Conceptual Master Plan for Phases 1 through 5*. When completed, the Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan will include group and single family picnic areas, fishing access, non-motorized boat portages, equestrian and vehicle parking, single and multi-use trails, and restroom facilities. The submitted application proposes to repair and improve two sections of a general use trail around the western edge of Lake Benoist; Restoration Site 3 and Restoration Site 4.

At Restoration Site 3, 735 linear feet of repairs and improvements are proposed, of which, approximately 3,718 square feet, (0.08 acres), are within waters of the State. Improvements will include the realignment, and surfacing with packed gravel, of a portion of the trail to higher ground to reduce the probability of future storm damage. Native trees or shrubs that are removed during the new upland trail alignment will be replaced at a 3:1 ratio. Restoration and repair of the existing stretch of trail within the lower elevation flood-prone area will include filling ruts, sinkholes, and resurfacing with packed gravel, reducing erosion and sediment delivery. Disturbed area will be restored

and protected using a combination of hydroseeding, mulch, and straw wattles. Due to the hydrologic connectivity between the Russian River and Lake Benoit a drainage lens is proposed for a section under the trail to prevent flooding and minimize sediment deposition. Rock rip rap slope protection will be placed on the sides of the path with the drainage lens, to stabilize and reduce erosion. Native tree species will be planted in the rip rap to reduce thermal impacts and add stability.

At Restoration Site 4, 250 linear feet of repairs and improvements are proposed along an existing general use trail, of which, 1,875 square feet, (0.04 acres), are within waters of the State. The trail will be raised in place and resurfaced with packed gravel, reducing erosion and sediment delivery. Any disturbed area will be restored and protected using a combination of hydroseeding, mulch, and straw wattles. In addition, a drainage lens is proposed under a section of the trail to allow flow from an adjacent wetland to pass unimpeded. Subdrains will be placed under the drainage lens to allow the flow from the wetlands to pass under the culvert, reducing sediment delivery and reducing thermal impacts. Rock rip rap slope protection will be placed on the sides of the path with the drainage lens to stabilize and reduce erosion. Native tree species will be planted in the rip rap to reduce thermal impacts and add stability.

Both sites have been operating as wet-ford areas for foot, bicycle, and equestrian traffic. Installation of the raised pathways will eliminate erosion and delivery of sediment. The subdrains passing under Site 4 will keep the water cooler and also prevent the delivery of sediment to Lake Benoit.

Construction is expected to take approximately 21 days and is planned for the low-flow season, August 15 to October 15. If any water flow is present during the construction period, appropriate methods will be taken to bypass flow around the work area.

Compensatory mitigation will include the planting of native tree species, collected on site, into the rock slope protection to add stability, and reduce thermal impact. The placement of drainage lenses and subdrains will allow upland flow to pass underground, reducing thermal impact and sediment delivery. Raising and resurfacing the failing trail will reduce sediment delivery. Trees and shrubs removed during trail realignment will be replaced with native species, collected on site, at a ratio of 3:1. Plantings will be irrigated as necessary until established, and monitored for five years.

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 soil erosion: work in and around waterways will be conducted during the dry season; installation of construction barrier fencing to preclude equipment entry into sensitive areas; installation of silt fencing or fiber rolls to prevent sediment loss from immediate work area; topsoil salvage and reapplication; and seeding and mulching.

The applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game for a 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement. The applicant has applied to US Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, Section 404 Permit.

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 15269 [Emergency Projects]. 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.

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 received 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 Blvd., Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.