

August 22, 2011

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

Crane Creek Fish Habitat Improvement Project
WDID No. 1B09028WNSO

Sonoma County

On March 12, 2009, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Kara Heckert of the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, water quality certification for proposed activities associated with the Crane Creek Fish Habitat Improvement Project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to approximately 151 linear feet, 0.0141 acres, of waters of the United States and waters of the State associated with Crane Creek, tributary to Dry Creek, within the Warm Springs Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.24, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The proposed project is located at 4000 & 4250 W. Dry Creek Road, Healdsburg, latitude 38.649444°N, longitude 122.925278°W, in Sonoma County.

The primary purpose of the proposed project is to address salmonid habitat limiting factors, along a 137-foot reach of Crane Creek.

The project proposes to enhance five step-pools in a bedrock waterfall along a 137 foot reach of Crane Creek. The extreme lower portion of this reach of Crane Creek is severely incised, increasing stream velocities. The most severe area of down-cutting is in the downstream—most 100 yards of stream up to the point of the bedrock waterfall which presents a partial or complete barrier to salmonids depending on flows, species, and life stage. The project proposes to use hand held jackhammers to deepen and widen the existing five step-pools along the waterfall to create hydraulic conditions that will improve fish passage for adult salmonids and provide summer rearing habitat to out-migrating juveniles. The design will follow the existing bedrock chute and will leave a majority of the existing bedrock waterfall in place. Winter base flows would be contained in the modified bedrock step-pool chute, while larger storm flows would spill over the waterfall as in the current condition.

Work will be done by hand crews with jackhammers and an excavator working from on top of the right stream bank to facilitate transporting the excavated material. The improvements to the pools would not require any bank grading or disturbance of trees. In addition to the pool enhancement, the project proposes to remove approximately five cubic yards of concrete blocks/slabs that are currently positioned on the left bank in between pools #1 and #2. The concrete would be removed with an excavator working on the top of the left bank adjacent to the work area.

Construction is planned for the late summer during low creek flows. If there is water encountered within the work areas, appropriate methods will be taken to dewater the

work area, and discharge the water to an upland area, or to bypass water around the work area back to the creek. Construction is planned for a total of two weeks and is tentatively expected to take place in September and October, 2011.

Compensatory mitigation for the proposed project is not required as the project will enhance instream habitat. 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, for heavy equipment use near a waterway, and to ensure concrete debris or sediment does not enter the stream channel.

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, and to the California Department of Fish and Game for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.

The Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, as Lead Agency is submitting a Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2011082046) 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 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.