

December 20, 2011

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

**Mr. William Hinkle,
Sei Querce Creek Restoration Project
WDID No. 1B11173WNSO
Sonoma County**

On September 15, 2011, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Megan Stromberg of WRA, Inc. on behalf of Mr. William Hinkle (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to the proposed Sei Querce Creek Restoration (Project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States (U.S.) and waters of the State associated with Sei Querce Creek and two tributary streams that flow to the Russian River, located within the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No.114.00 (Geyserville Hydrologic Sub-Area No.114.25).

The Project involves realignment and restoration of portions of formerly modified tributaries, removal of artificial grade control structures within the stream beds and re-grading of the stream bed, improvement of a low water crossing, installation of riprap to bolster undercut tree roots, use of bioengineering stream bank stabilization, replacement of a failed on-bank timber bridge with a free-span bridge, and thorough replanting of riparian native species to reestablish the riparian corridor. The project is located at 21350 River Road, Geyserville, Assessor's Parcel Number 141-180-003, latitude 38.72648°N, longitude 122.89476°W.

Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. In addition, Applicant has applied for a 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game. The Regional Water Board has determined that this project is Categorical Exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA - class 15333-Small Habitat Restoration Projects categorical exemption) and anticipate filing a notice of exemption.

The Russian River is identified as impaired on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list. The Russian River is listed as impaired for sediment and temperature. At present, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) have not been established for this water body. If TMDLs are established and implementation plans are adopted for this watershed prior to the expiration date of the requested Certification, the Regional Water Board may revise the provisions of that Certification to address actions identified in such action plans. Bank erosion is identified as a source contributing to the sediment impairment. Removal of riparian vegetation is identified as a source contributing to temperature impairment. Activities that will be authorized by the pending certification are designed to increase riparian vegetation and reduce sediment discharges from bank erosion. Actions authorized by this Order require implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and turbidity control and planting of more riparian zone shade vegetation at and near the project site. Accordingly, this pending Order is consistent with, and implements BMPs that would attenuate sediment and temperature adverse impacts.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within 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) 576-22653 or SBargsten@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed road construction activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed project including maps and design drawings. The related documents and comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.

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