

February 8, 2012

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

Crescent City Harbor District – Outer Harbor and Outer Boat Basin Dredging and
Rehabilitation
WDID No. 1A10115WNDN

Del Norte County

On December 29, 2011, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Crescent City Harbor District (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for proposed activities associated with dredging and rehabilitation of Crescent City Harbor's Outer Harbor and Outer Boat Basin. Proposed activities are associated with damage caused by tsunami events that occurred in November 2006 and March 2011. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Pacific Ocean in the Smith River Plain Hydrologic Subarea No. 103.11.

On November 15, 2006, an 8.3 magnitude earthquake occurred in the Kuril Islands of Japan that generated a tsunami that reached the California coast. A series of waves engulfed the Crescent City Harbor causing extensive damage to the docks and berthing system of the inner boat basin. Certification was issued on April 29, 2011 authorizing repairs to 400 linear feet and 6,300 square feet of existing RSP around the perimeter of the Inner Boat Basin and authorizing dredging to remove up to 7,424 cubic yards of accumulated sediment from the Inner Boat Basin. Additional damage to the Harbor and Inner Boat Basin was caused by another tsunami that occurred in March 2011. On July 7, 2011, an amendment to the certification was issued to authorize repairs to an additional 2,500 linear feet (45,000 square feet) of existing RSP and increased dredging to remove up to 78,000 cubic yards of sediment.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to amend to the April 29, 2011 certification to authorize additional dredging and RSP repairs to the Outer Harbor and Outer Boat Basin areas. The Harbor's Administration Dock was destroyed during the tsunami and it will be replaced along with all equipment and appurtenances. The proposed project includes repairs to 381 linear feet of existing damaged RSP at the Administration Dock and repairs to 204 linear feet of existing damaged RSP areas on Whaler Island. Proposed activities also include dredging to remove approximately 251,160 cubic yards of sediment from the Outer Harbor and Outer Boat Basin areas. Sediment testing is currently underway to determine suitability for sediment disposal at the Humboldt Open Ocean Disposal Site (HOODS).

Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed project. Noncompensatory mitigation includes implementation of Best Management Practices for turbidity control. The proposed project is expected to begin in July 2012 and it is expected to take six months to complete.

The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Applicant has also applied for a Coastal Development Permit. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game is not required. The Crescent City Harbor District determined that this project is statutorily exempt from CEQA review (Section 15269 – Emergency Projects). Regional Water Board staff have determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review (Section 15269 – Emergency Projects) and anticipate filing a Notice of Exemption for the proposed project.

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 project including maps and 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.