

February 26, 2013

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste  
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)  
Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works  
Porter Creek Bridge Replacement Project  
WDID No. 1B12202WNSO**

Sonoma County

On January 3, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Levi Gurule of Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for activities associated with replacement of a bridge over Porter Creek. Project is located near 3120 Porter Creek Road, Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, latitude 38.557019°N, longitude 122.694197°W. The proposed project will cause temporary impacts to approximately 150 linear feet/872 square feet, and 190 linear feet/2,590 square feet, of creek bed and bank and riparian area of Porter Creek, Mark West Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.23, Russian River Hydrologic Unit 114.00.

The project includes replacement of the existing Porter Creek Road Bridge over Porter Creek with a new, wider bridge, and construction of in-channel habitat enhancements. The Porter Creek Bridge was constructed in 1948 and does not meet current seismic standards, and could collapse in a large earthquake. The possibility of retrofitting the existing bridge was investigated and designed, however, bridge inspection crews from Caltrans found cracks and fissures in some of the steel beams that help support the bridge. In an emergency action, County maintenance crews have temporarily re-supported the bridge using steel beams. The repair, however, is a temporary measure, and structural engineers from Caltrans and the County have decided that the bridge requires replacement because the damage is too great to allow for a cost-effective permanent repair. The project will also construct safety improvements, including adequate shoulders and a turn lane on the upstream side of the bridge.

The proposed replacement bridge is a single span concrete box girder bridge approximately 160 feet long with one 12 foot wide traffic lane in each direction of travel, a 12 foot wide left-turn channelization lane and two 10 foot wide shoulders. The center left-turn channelization lane would be used for vehicles acceleration onto Porter Creek Road from Franz Valley Road and residential driveways. In total, the traveled width of the bridge will be 56 feet. The bridge will be built in two stages, the first stage consisting of one-lane bridges built upstream and downstream of the existing bridge. The second stage would be to remove the old bridge and construct a fill-in bridge, between the two one-lane bridges to make a single 56 foot wide bridge. It may be possible to construct the bridge within a single dry season, but it is likely that the fill-in bridge deck would be constructed over the winter season using a platform supported by storm resistant false work if delays are encountered.

The project also includes instream habitat enhancements in order to compensate for permanent and temporary impacts associated with the project. The purpose of the enhancements include stabilizing the channel, reducing the delivery of sediment, improving rearing and spawning habitat for salmonids with the project reach, providing shelter for salmonids, and increasing habitat diversity within the project reach. Additional compensatory mitigation includes planting of approximately 74 native trees and additional understory native species within the riparian area near the bridge.

The project will increase impervious area. Vegetated swales will be constructed to treat and infiltrate stormwater runoff from the proposed project.

Best management practices (BMPs) will be used to reduce impacts to the creek. BMPs for concrete work in and near a creek will be employed. Sediment reduction BMPs for disturbed areas will also be used. All disturbed areas will be regarded, revegetated, and have erosion control BMPs installed to promote their return to pre-project conditions.

Work is scheduled to begin Spring 2012 and be completed by June 2014.

The County of Sonoma, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, completed a Mitigated Negative Declaration, December 5, 2006, and filed it with the State Clearinghouse (No. 2006082010), pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

The Applicant has applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Applicant has applied to US Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit.

Project is scheduled to start as soon as possible to reduce the public health and safety risk. Under Title 23, California Code of Regulations, Section 3858(a): "The executive director or the executive officer with whom an application for certification is filed shall provide public notice of an application at least twenty-one (21) days before taking certification action on the application, unless the public notice requirement has been adequately satisfied by the applicant or federal agency. If the applicant or federal agency provides public notice, it shall be in a manner and to an extent fully equivalent to that normally provided by the certifying agency. If an emergency requires that certification be issued in less than 21 days, public notice shall be provided as much in advance of issuance as possible, but no later than simultaneously with issuance of certification." Due to the nature of public health and safety associated with this project, 401 Water Quality Certification will be issued during the 21-day public comment period. Public comments will still be accepted and reviewed during the entire 21-day 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.