

**September 6, 2013**

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

Hearst Willits Road, CR306, Culvert Replacement at MP 2.17  
WDID No. 1B13088WNME

Mendocino County

On July 12, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mendocino County Department of Transportation (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for activities associated with the Hearst Willits Road, CR306, Culvert Replacement at MP 2.17 Project (Project). The proposed Project would cause disturbances to waters of the United States (U.S.) associated with an unnamed tributary to Outlet Creek within the Eel River Hydrologic Unit, Outlet Creek Hydrologic Sub-Area 111.61. The Project is located at on Hearst Willits Road, near Mile post 2.71, Willits, Mendocino County, at latitude 39.430 N, longitude 123.312 W. Permanent impact to the creek bed and bank would be approximately 800 square feet.

The Project includes public safety improvements to a failed 7' x 10' x 25' culvert beneath the roadway. The culvert failure caused failure of the roadway surface during a severe storm in early December, 2012. A temporary "Bailey Bridge" has been placed over the channel on an emergency basis. Using an excavator from the roadway, the proposed Project will replace the culvert with a bottomless arch culvert of the same size and length. Excavation will occur within the existing culvert, headwall and roadway footprint. The new culvert will be backfilled with cement and fill material and then overlaid with a new 30' x 100' mixed asphalt concrete road section. The Project will improve water quality by using a bottomless culvert which allows for stream bed permeability, a natural stream bed surface for benthic habitat improves movement through the culvert by amphibians, improves fish passage and aquatic habitat. The Project will employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction.

The Project is planned to take place the summer or fall of 2013. Work is proposed to last for approximately 21 days.

The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 permit. Additionally, the applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a Streambed Alteration Agreement.

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, had determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15301(b)-Existing Facilities, and will file a Notice of Determination with the

State Clearinghouse concurrent with issuance of the 401 Water Quality Certification, pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

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 photos. 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.

The Project is scheduled to start as soon as possible to reduce the public safety issue of the roadway failing due to the culvert failure. 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 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 or Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.