

September 27, 2013

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

California Department of Transportation
State Route 36 Post Mile 21.98 Rock Rack Installation Project
WDID No. 1B13062WNHU

Humboldt County

On May 20, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to the proposed State Route 36 Post Mile 21.98 Rock Rack Installation Project (Project). The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States and the State, associated with an unnamed stream tributary of the Van Duzen River within the Eel River Hydrologic Unit, Bridgeville Hydrologic Sub-Area 111.22.

The proposed Project is located on State Route (SR) 36 at post mile 21.98, in Humboldt County. The purpose of the Project is to install a rock rack upstream of the culvert to minimize rock transport material that could block the culvert potentially causing material to back up onto the highway posing a traffic hazard. The scope of the Project, within jurisdictional waters, is to temporarily divert water flow around the site using a series of cofferdams, temporarily install a spill kit, temporarily install downstream sediment control, permanently install two footings (approximately 5 feet length, 1 foot width, 3 feet deep), and permanently install the rock rack (approximately 8 feet wide and 16 feet long).

The Project is within the Lower Van Duzen River watershed in the Eel River Hydrologic Unit. The unnamed creek at the Project site drains to the Lower Van Duzen River which is listed on the CWA section 303(d) list as impaired for sediment. Roads are a significant source of sediment in the watershed (directly, from surface erosion, and indirectly, by destabilizing hillsides).

Caltrans has determined that the proposed Project would result in approximately 12.1 square feet / 12.1 linear feet of permanent and approximately 238 square feet / 70 linear feet of temporary impacts to jurisdictional waters. Caltrans proposes to offset the permanent impacts to riparian vegetation by planting native riparian plants including willows at the Project site. Caltrans also proposes to restore temporarily impacted areas to pre-construction condition following completion of construction activities.

Project implementation is proposed during the fall of 2013 (estimated duration of approximately 5 days). Instream work would be limited to the dry season, between June 15 and October 15. Caltrans would utilize Best Management Practices to control pollutants during construction.

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

On March 27, 2013, the California Department of Transportation, acting as lead agency, filed a Notice of Exemption (section 15304 minor alterations to land) for the proposed Project in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental documentation, and has determined that the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA and anticipates filing a Notice of Exemption.

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 Brendan Thompson at (707) 576-2699 or Brendan.Thompson@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 activities. The Regional Water Board's Project file includes the application for certification and additional details of the proposed Project, including maps and design drawings. Project documents and any 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.