

June 11, 2014

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

**Border Coast Regional Airport Authority – Jack McNamara Field, Runway Safety  
Improvement Project  
WDID No. 1A13028WNDN**

**Del Norte County**

On March 25, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Border Coast Regional Airport Authority (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with upgrading Runway Safety Areas (RSA) at Jack McNamara Field in Crescent City for the purpose of enhancing the safety of airport operations in response to congressional mandate, BCRAA – Jack McNamara Field, Runway Safety Improvement Project (Project). The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with wetlands in the Smith River Plain Hydrologic Subarea No. 103.11. The Project site is located at latitude 41.782°N, and longitude 124.2375°W. The proposed Project will cause permanent impacts to wetlands and stream channel, waters of the U.S. and State. Additionally, temporary impacts to wetlands, waters of the U.S. or the State, are proposed.

Construction of the RSA upgrades will result in unavoidable direct impacts to adjacent wetlands and drainage channels. The proposed RSA improvement Project will result in permanent impacts to approximately 12.96 acres of wetlands and 0.008 acres of stream channel waters of the State. The proposed Project will also result in temporary impacts to approximately 3.90 acres of wetlands.

A RSA is a defined surface surrounding the runway that enhances safety and reduces risk of damage to airplanes in the event of an excursion from the runway. RSAs also provide accessibility for firefighting and rescue equipment responding to runway incidents. The purpose of the proposed Project is to enhance airport safety by bringing the existing RSAs into compliance with current Federal Aviation Administration airport design standards. Federal design standards state that RSAs shall: 1) be cleared and graded and have no potentially hazardous ruts, humps, depressions, or other surface variations; 2) be drained by grading or storm sewers to prevent water accumulation; 3) be capable, under dry conditions, of supporting snow removal equipment, aircraft rescue and firefighting equipment, and the occasional passage of aircraft without causing structural damage to the aircraft; 4) be free of objects, except for objects that need to be located in the RSA because of their function; and, 5) meet grade/slope requirements at the ends of runways. RSA improvements will not increase impervious surfaces at the site.

The proposed RSA upgrades will be accomplished by filling and grading uneven terrain along the length and width of the runways that exceeds allowable RSA gradients. The upgraded RSAs will provide a smooth transition with minimal change in elevation and surface variation between the existing paved runway surfaces and adjacent terrain comprised of compacted and mowed ground cover.

Compensatory mitigation is required for the permanent wetland impacts. GHD Inc., on behalf of the Applicant, submitted a detailed final conceptual plan to mitigate both permanent and temporary impacts to Waters of the U.S. and State, *Del Norte County Regional Airport, Jack McNamara Field (CEC) Runway Safety Area (RSA) Improvement Project, Crescent City, Mitigation and Monitoring Plan* on June 4, 2014. Final design plans and any subsequent plan changes will be submitted for review and approval of the Regional Water Board. The proposed compensatory mitigation package includes wetland reestablishment of approximately 9.9 acres and 64.4 acres of preservation at the Pacific Shores Subdivision (PSS), an unfinished planned community development project located approximately five miles north of Jack McNamara Field that consists of an interconnected network of paved roadways. Wetland reestablishment will generally be accomplished by removing the existing asphalt paved roadways within PSS and revegetation of those areas with appropriate wetland species. Habitat for Oregon silverspot butterfly will also be enhanced at PSS by removing invasive plants and reseeding areas with native host plants and nectar plants utilized by the butterfly. Proposed mitigation also includes wetland establishment of approximately 16.2 acres, 0.3 acres of reestablishment and 8.3 acres of preservation at the Bay Meadows property located south of Lake Earl, described in the mitigation plan. Approximately 3.9 acres of temporarily impacted wetlands are proposed to be restored to pre-project condition. The Project proposes to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for storm water treatment, erosion control, and use of heavy equipment in wetlands and drainage channels.

The RSA construction for Runway 17/35 is proposed in the summer/fall of 2014, where the RSA construction for Runway 11/29 is proposed in early 2015. The wetland mitigation construction for the RSA project is planned to commence in September 2015 and end in December 2016.

The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to perform the project under Individual Permit, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Applicant has also applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and a Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission.

On December 1, 2011, the Border Coast Regional Airport Authority (BCRAA) certified a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH No. 2009071019) for the project in order to comply with CEQA. A supplemental Draft EIR (SCH No.2009071019) was produced by the BCRAA in March of 2014.

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. 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 Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

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