

December 3, 2014

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

**Willits Emergency Water Line Replacement Well
WDID 1B14117WNME**

Mendocino County

On November 6, 2014, the North Coast Regional water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the City of Willits (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 Willits Emergency Water Line Replacement Well Project (project). The proposed project would cause disturbances to waters of the United States and the state associated with Wetlands that are tributary to Outlet Creek, which is tributary to the Eel River (111.61). The project is located in Willits, at latitude 39.437222°N and longitude 123.3425°W. The Assessor's parcel number is 108-020-05. Permanent impacts to waters of the United States and state would be approximately 62 square feet and 10.67 linear feet. Temporary impacts would be 88 square feet and 22 linear feet.

The purpose of the project is to establish a new replacement well and 21.75 feet of new 6 inch piping to replace the existing "Elias Well", which is used as an emergency source of domestic water. The State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water requires at 50-foot sanitary seal on municipal wells. The City cannot verify that the Elias Well has an appropriate seal, therefore the Division of Drinking Water is requiring the City to drill a replacement well.

A drill will be used to dig the well and there will be a portable shaker pit where the soil material and bentonite clay from digging the well will be placed. When the slurry has settled the solids will be loaded into a vacuum truck and placed in an upland disposal site owned by the City. The drilling fluid or liquid will be disposed of in the City's wastewater treatment pond. The work area will be contained by placing straw bales around the perimeter of the site. The straw bales will be staked in with rebar and lined with visqueen to contain all sediment and liquids. Wattles will be staked at the perimeter of the straw bale containment structure to catch any water that may spill over the sides. A vacuum truck will be used to vacuum up the sediment. The soil solids will be trucked and deposited in the City's upland disposal site. The liquids will be placed into one of the wastewater treatment plant ponds. The final well will have a 6x6 foot concrete slab surface placed around the well for a total of 36 square feet. A trench approximately 21.75 feet long will be dug to place a 6-inch pipe which will connect to the existing water line for the abandoned Elias Well.

The fencing and other infrastructure around the Elias well will be removed and this area will be restored, although the well itself will remain. These areas will be seeded and allowed to return to the natural on-site conditions. The restoration of the old Elias Well site will also include removal of invasive Himalayan blackberry. The approximate area to be reseeded and restored around the Elias Well is 1,539 square feet or 0.35 acres. The project is proposed to start as soon as possible, and work will only be conducted if conditions are dry enough to have equipment at the site. The project is expected to last 5 to 10 business days.

The applicant has applied for Clean Water Act Section 404 Authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

The North Coast Regional Water Board, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15302(c)-Replacement or Reconstruction, and will file a Notice of Exemption 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. 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 Kaete King at (707) 576-2848 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.