

May 7, 2015

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

**Little Browns Creek Power Pole Removal & Mitigation Project  
WDID No. 1A14111WNTR**

**Trinity County**

On October 28, 2014, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Trinity Public Utilities District (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with the Little Browns Creek Power Pole Removal & Mitigation Project (Project). The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States and the State associated with Little Browns Creek within the Trinity River Hydrologic Unit No. 106.32. The Project is located within Little Browns Creek Weaverville, Trinity County, at approximate latitude 40.787°N, and longitude 122.8954°W. No permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State are proposed. Temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State include approximately 18 linear feet of impacts to creek bed and bank.

The primary purpose of the Project is preliminary remediation of impacts associated with approximately 600 linear feet of unpermitted in-stream impacts to waters of the US and State including grading and riparian vegetation removal conducted by the applicant, within the Little Browns Creek floodplain during maintenance to existing power poles. Activities proposed by the applicant would reduce sediment within the reach and enhance aquatic habitat. Restoration of impacts to riparian vegetation and final restoration of the creek channel will be conducted after power poles are removed from the active channel as mitigation for unpermitted impacts. The applicant is currently seeking regulatory approval for removal of the power poles as continued maintenance has caused degradation of Little Browns Creek where legacy power poles exist in the channel. The applicant will submit a subsequent application for Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification to permanently relocate legacy in-stream power poles out of the creek prior to expiration of this proposed certification.

The proposed Project would include construction of a temporary 2 foot tall, 15 – 18 foot long earthen and rock swale to redirect braided channel flow to an existing defined channel during low flows. Work will be completed when no water is present at this reach of Little Browns Creek. The Project proposes to employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction.

The Project is planned to be conducted in 2015 when stream conditions are dry and is expected to take approximately one day to complete.

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

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, as a Lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15321 Enforcement Actions by Regulatory Agencies, 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. 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.