

October 26, 2005

**Public Notice for 401 Water Quality Certification
and/or
Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

**California Department of Transportation
Highway 20, PM 33.3 to PM 37.9, Rehabilitation Project
WDID No. 1B05094WNME
Mendocino County**

On July 7, 2005, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Gail Popham on behalf of the California Department of Transportation, requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Highway 20 Rehabilitation Project from PM 33.3 to PM 37.9, Mendocino County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to approximately 0.02 acres of Waters of the U.S. associated with the Upper Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.30. The beginning of the project is located in the Ukiah Hydrologic Sub Area No. 114.31 with the remainder of the project located in the Coyote Valley Hydrologic Sub Area No. 114.32.

The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate a 4.5-mile segment of Highway 20 from PM 33.3 to PM 37.9 in Mendocino County. The proposed project includes the rehabilitation of a number of drainage systems, repair of a minor slip-out, treatment of bridge decks, minor road widening to extend turn lanes, and repaving the roadway.

The proposed project includes the rehabilitation of fifty-two drainage systems, thirty-four of which require raising the drop inlets or asphalt concrete entrance tapers to accommodate the roadway overly. Four cross-culverts will be replaced, with the remaining drainage systems requiring new headwalls, flared-end sections, replacing down-drains, and/or lining the culverts to extend service. All construction activities will take place in dry channels. If dewatering is required, a dam will be constructed ten feet above the inlet in order to passively divert water to the outlet. If diverting to the outlet is found to be impractical, the water will be pumped into a Baker tank, or sedimentation basin and be allowed to percolate into the ground.

A total of fifteen drainage systems will undergo the installation of rock riprap, resulting in a permanent loss of 0.02 acres of Waters of the U.S. In order to compensate for the loss of Waters of the U.S., the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is proposing to enhance the areas at nine culvert inlet and fifteen culvert outlet locations where the rock riprap will be installed by planting native vegetation. The vegetation will aid in further stabilizing channel banks, creating shade, and providing additional wildlife habitat. Caltrans will also be replacing four down-drains with an open-aired rock-lined ditch for a total of approximately 400 linear feet.

Minor bridge deck rehab work is proposed for the Russian River BOH (#10-183), Redwood Valley UC (#10-183), and Cold Creek #1 (#10-0040). This work will include grinding off the existing AC on the bridge decks, preparing the bridge deck by chaining and chipping, cleaning the bridge decks, minor removal and replacing of unsound concrete, and placing a Methacrylate treatment on the decks. In order to ensure that no debris will be discharged into nearby surface waters, all deck grinding and surface preparation equipment used will be fitted with vacuum/sweeper mechanisms so that excess material will be collected and contained. The drainage holes in the bridge deck will also be temporarily plugged to prevent the discharge of debris.

The California Department of Transportation is requesting that the water quality certification and/or waste discharge requirements be issued before their proposed start date of June 2006. Construction is projected for June through October 2006. Construction is not proposed for the rainy season between October 15th and May 15th. In the event that it becomes necessary for construction to occur during this rainy season, the project will be subject to additional conditions to ensure winterization techniques are implemented, and to safeguard water quality.

Compensatory Mitigation is not required for this project. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control including, but not limited to, weed free straw mulch, straw wattles, and silt fencing. All disturbed soils will be returned to their natural contours and replanted.

The Regional Water Board, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for a Class 1 Categorical Exemption, Existing Facilities, pursuant to CEQA.

Caltrans has filed applications with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Nationwide Permits 3, 14, and 33 as well as a Streambed Alteration Agreement (CDFG 1602) with the California Department of Fish and Game.

Regional Water Board staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice. If you have any questions or comments please contact staff member Michelle Jensen at (707) 576-6711 or at mjensen@waterboards.ca.gov, or staff member Andrew Jensen at (707) 576-2683 or at ajensen@waterboards.ca.gov, within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The related documents and comments received are on file and may be inspected 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.