



Enforcement News

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/>

Sutter Creek Bridge Construction Site Settles Enforcement Action for Stormwater Violations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 6, 2017

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SACRAMENTO – The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board has reached a settlement agreement with the city of Sutter Creek in Amador County for alleged stormwater and water quality certification permit violations at its Badger Street Bridge construction project.

The city enrolled the bridge replacement project in the statewide General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities, and obtained a Water Quality Certification to allow it to disturb the waterway, but failed to comply with the requirements to protect local water quality and the environment. The city of Sutter Creek agreed to pay \$86,112 and to comply with the permit requirements to ensure that no additional environmental damage takes place.

The settlement was reached using a streamlined process that provided the city of Sutter Creek with an opportunity to quickly resolve the alleged violations that threatened Sutter Creek.

“Stormwater runoff at construction sites is a serious issue. Not having the proper control measures in place to prevent sediment-laden runoff can lead to serious environmental impacts,” said Andrew Altevogt, assistant executive officer for the Regional Water Board. “We take these types of violations very seriously, which is why we initiated this fast track enforcement approach to help sites such as Sutter Creek’s get into compliance quicker and limit any further environmental damage.”

As part of the settlement, the city will contribute \$38,385 to the California Product Stewardship Council for its Sustainable Medication Take Back Program for Amador County, which includes a pharmaceutical disposal education and outreach effort to protect surface waters.

Water Board staff inspected the bridge project on Oct. 28, 2016, during a rainstorm. Staff found the city’s contractors had not installed sediment or erosion control measures as sediment-laden runoff was flowing directly into Sutter Creek. In addition, a diversion dam failed, allowing upstream water to flow directly through the construction site and cause additional sediment to be transported downstream.

On Nov. 3, 2016, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff inspected the site and observed that construction work at the site was causing a significant amount of sediment to be discharged into the creek. CDFW personnel also found insufficient sediment and erosion controls.

Discharges of sediment can cloud the receiving water, which reduces the amount of sunlight reaching aquatic plants. These discharges can also clog fish gills, smother aquatic habitat and spawning areas, and transport other materials such as nutrients, metals, and oil and grease, which can negatively impact aquatic life and habitat.

The owners of any construction site greater than 1 acre in size must enroll in the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities. Among other items, this permit requires that the owner hire a “storm water professional” to design and install an effective combination of erosion and sediment controls to prevent discharges of sediment-laden stormwater.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is a California state agency responsible for the preservation and enhancement of water quality. For more information, visit the Central Valley Water Board’s [website](#).

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