



**California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region**



**Geoffrey M. Hales, Acting Chairman**

**Linda S. Adams**  
Secretary for  
Environmental Protection

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**Arnold  
Schwarzenegger**  
Governor

January 14, 2010

In the Matter of

**Water Quality Certification**

for the

**CITY OF WILLITS – RAILROAD AVENUE AT BAECHTEL CREEK BRIDGE  
REPLACEMENT  
WDID No. 1B09090WNME**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| APPLICANT:       | City of Willits   |
| RECEIVING WATER: | Baechtel Creek  |
| HYDROLOGIC UNIT: | Outlet Creek Hydrologic Subarea No. 111.61                              |
| COUNTY:          | Mendocino   |
| FILE NAME:       | Willits, City of – Railroad Avenue at Baechtel Creek Bridge Replacement |

BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On August 5, 2009, the City of Willits (Applicant) filed an application for water quality certification (certification) under section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board) for activities associated with replacing an existing bridge on Railroad Avenue over Baechtel Creek in the City of Willits. The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on December 2, 2009, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. We did not receive any public comments on this project.
2. The project involves removal and replacement of the existing 9-foot wide, 60-foot long, steel flatcar bridge and its associated steel support piers. The existing bridge is used primarily by a trucking company located south of the bridge and the bridge does not have a sufficient load rating to be used safely by loaded trucks. The Applicant considered several alternative bridge designs and alignments, and initially determined that three bridge structure types were appropriate for this location. Due to vertical geometry constraints associated with adjacent roadway and property elevations, and a requirement to maintain at least two feet of vertical clearance between the bridge deck bottom and high water elevation, a three-span cast-in-place

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concrete slab bridge design was selected because its thin deck section allows for a lower vertical alignment while providing adequate clearance above the high water elevation.

3. The existing bridge will be replaced with a 26-foot wide, 67-foot long, three-span, reinforced concrete slab bridge. The new bridge abutments and bents will be supported by fourteen 15-inch diameter pre-cast concrete piles driven beneath the scour line of the streambed. Each abutment will be supported by a row of three piles driven at the top of the streambank and both bents will be supported by a row of four piles driven into the streambank near the elevation of ordinary high water. The rows of concrete support piles and the new abutments will be located at approximately the same elevations along the streambanks as the existing bridge components.
4. The project involves clearing and grading along the streambanks of Baechtel Creek under the bridge alignment for a distance of 50 linear feet. Clearing and grading will extend approximately 12 feet upstream and 12 feet downstream of the new 26-foot wide bridge structure. The streambanks will be graded to closely match the existing slopes. A 5-foot deep toe trench will be excavated along the base of the streambanks and adjacent to the edges of the low flow stream channel. Graded streambank slopes will be covered with a layer of fabric-backed rock slope protection (RSP). RSP placement will begin by backfilling the toe-trench and progressing upslope in approximately 5-foot sections. Stockpiled soil will be spread and hand-raked over the RSP for even distribution, and exposed soil areas will be mulched with certified weed free straw.
5. The project includes installation of a temporary vehicle crossing over Baechtel Creek. The temporary crossing will be located immediately downstream of the bridge in an area of a historical wet ford crossing. The temporary crossing will consist of a 24-inch diameter culvert covered by three feet of washed river-run gravel and a one foot layer of aggregate base rock. At the end of the project, the aggregate base layer will be removed, the remaining washed gravel will be removed or spread evenly over the streambed, and the adjacent streambanks will be planted with willow cuttings and white alder root stock.
6. Although the project will be constructed during the summer low-flow season, a coffer dam and a temporary stream diversion will be installed. The coffer dam will be placed immediately upstream of the active construction area using clean washed river-run gravel. A plastic liner will be inserted below the streambed and over the upstream face of the coffer dam to direct flows into a diversion pipe placed through the gravel coffer dam. Flows will be piped around the construction area by gravity or by pumping. Diverted flows will be returned to the stream channel immediately downstream of the temporary crossing. The diversion pipe may be routed through the culvert running under the temporary crossing.

7. The RSP and concrete piers will result in permanent impacts to 2,000 square feet and 100 linear feet of streambank. Dewatering activities and the temporary stream crossing will temporarily impact 1,730 square feet and 100 linear feet of streambed.
8. There are currently two concrete blocks located under the bridge and on both sides of the low flow channel. The concrete blocks appear to be remnants of an old bridge foundation. The low flow channel under the existing bridge is currently narrowed and confined by the vertical walls of these old concrete blocks. The project also includes removal of these old concrete blocks (approximately 110 square feet) from the streambed.
9. Compensatory mitigation is required for impacts to the streambanks and riparian vegetation. Compensatory mitigation includes revegetation of the RSP, temporary crossing area, and other disturbed streambank areas with a variety of plants including trees, shrubs, sedges and rushes, as described in the January 7, 2010, Revegetation Plan, City of Willits Railroad Avenue Bridge Replacement (Revegetation Plan).
10. The applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit Nos. 3 and 33, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Applicant has also applied to the California Department of Fish and Game for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.
11. On August 1, 2005, the City of Willits approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2005052120) for the project in order to comply with CEQA. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.
12. This discharge is also regulated under State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ, "General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredge and Fill Discharges That Have Received State Water Quality Certification," which requires compliance with all conditions of this water quality certification.

Receiving Water: Baechtel Creek in the Outlet Creek Hydrologic Subarea No. 111.61

Filled or Excavated Area: Area Temporarily Impacted: 1,730 square feet of streambed  
Area Permanently Impacted: 2,000 square feet of streambank

Total Linear Impacts: Length Temporarily Impacted: 100 linear feet of streambed  
Length Permanently Impacted: 100 linear feet of streambank

Dredge Volume: None

Latitude/Longitude: 39.404590 N/123.347463 W

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the City of Willits – Railroad Avenue at Baechtel Creek Bridge Replacement (WDID No. 1B09090WNME), as described in the application, will comply with sections 301, 302, 303, 306 and 307 of the Clean Water Act, and with applicable provisions of state law, provided that the Applicant complies with the following terms and conditions:

1. This certification action is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including review and amendment pursuant to Water Code section 13330 and title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3867.
2. This certification action is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any discharge from any activity involving a hydroelectric facility requiring a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license or an amendment to a FERC license unless the pertinent certification application was filed pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3855, subdivision (b) and the application specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.
3. This certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 2200, and owed by the Applicant.
4. The Regional Water Board shall be notified in writing at least five working days (working days are Monday – Friday) prior to the commencement of ground disturbing activities, with details regarding the construction schedule, in order to allow staff to be present onsite during construction, and to answer any public inquiries that may arise regarding the project.
5. No debris, soil, silt, sand, bark, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete washings, oil or petroleum products, or other organic or earthen material from any construction or associated activity of whatever nature, other than that authorized by this Order, shall be allowed to enter into or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall into waters of the State. When operations are completed, any excess material or debris shall be removed from the work area.
6. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion, sediment and turbidity control shall be implemented and in place at commencement of, during and after any ground clearing activities or any other project activities that could result in erosion or sediment discharges to surface water.
7. All activities and BMPs shall be implemented according to the submitted application and the conditions in this certification.

8. Disturbance or removal of vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the project.
9. A copy of this Order and the application documents submitted by the Applicant for this certification shall be provided to all contractors and subcontractors conducting the work, and shall be in their possession at the work site.
10. The Applicant shall revegetate the implement the Revegetation Plan submitted by Winzler and Kelly on behalf of the City of Willits. The Applicant shall submit a monitoring report to this office within 180 days of project completion containing the quantities of each plant specie that was planted and photos showing all revegetated areas. Annual monitoring reports, including representative photos of revegetated areas and survival rates for each planted species, shall be submitted annually for a minimum of five years following project completion. Revegetation will be considered successful when 70 percent of planted vegetation has survived for at least five years.
11. Only river-run gravel washed to a cleanliness value of at least 85, using the Caltrans Test No. 227, shall used as fill material for the temporary vehicle crossing and coffer dam.
12. If, at any time, an unauthorized discharge to surface water (including wetlands, rivers or streams) occurs, or any water quality problem arises, the associated project activities shall cease immediately until adequate BMPs are implemented. The Regional Water Board shall be notified promptly and in no case more than 24 hours after the unauthorized discharge or water quality problem arises.
13. Prior to implementing any change to the project that may have a significant or material effect on the findings, conclusions, or conditions of this Order, the Applicant shall obtain the written approval of the Regional Water Board Executive Officer.
14. All project work shall be conducted as described in this Order and in the application submitted by the Applicant. If the Regional Water Board is not notified of a significant alteration to the project, it will be considered a violation of this Order, and the Applicant may be subject to Regional Water Board enforcement actions.
15. The Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this Order, as appropriate, to implement any new or revised water quality standards and implementation plans adopted and approved pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act or Section 303 of the Clean Water Act.
16. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this certification.
17. In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this certification, the violation or threatened violation shall be subject to any remedies,

penalties, process or sanctions as provided for under applicable State or federal law. For the purposes of section 401(d) of the Clean Water Act, the applicability of any State law authorizing remedies, penalties, process or sanctions constitutes a limitation necessary to assure compliance with the water quality standards and other pertinent requirements incorporated into this certification. In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this certification, the Regional Water Board may require the holder of any federal permit or license subject to this certification to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the Regional Water Board deems appropriate, provided that the burden, including costs, of the reports shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and the benefits to be obtained from the reports. In response to any violation of the conditions of this certification, the Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this certification as appropriate to ensure compliance.

18. In the event of any change in control of ownership of land presently owned or controlled by the Applicant, the Applicant shall notify the successor-in-interest of the existence of this Order by letter and shall forward a copy of the letter to the Regional Water Board at the above address.

To discharge dredged or fill material under this Order, the successor-in-interest must send to the Regional Water Board Executive Officer a written request for transfer of the Order. The request must contain the requesting entity's full legal name, the state of incorporation if a corporation, and the address and telephone number of the person(s) responsible for contact with the Regional Water Board. The request must also describe any changes to the project proposed by the successor-in-interest or confirm that the successor-in-interest intends to implement the project as described in this Order.

19. Except as may be modified by any preceding conditions, all certification actions are contingent on: a) the discharge being limited to and all proposed mitigation being completed in strict compliance with the Applicant's project description, and b) compliance with all applicable requirements of the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan).
20. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on January 14, 2015. Conditions and monitoring requirements outlined in this certification are not subject to the expiration date outlined above, and remain in full effect and are enforceable.

If you have any questions or comments please call Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801.

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Catherine Kuhlman  
Executive Officer

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Original to: Mr. Paul Cayler, City of Willits, 111 East Commercial Street, Willits, CA  
95490

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