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**California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region  
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Arnold  
Schwarzenegger  
Governor

April 7, 2010

In the Matter of

**Water Quality Certification**

for the

**California Department of Transportation  
Highway 162 – Sand Bank Grind and Replace, Storm Damage Repair Project:  
WDID No. 1B10018WNME**

APPLICANT: California Department of Transportation  
RECEIVING WATER: Unnamed tributaries the Eel River  
HYDROLOGIC AREA: Eel River Hydrologic Unit (HU) No.111.00  
COUNTY: Mendocino  
FILE NAME: CDOT - Hwy 162, Sand Bank Grind and Replace - Storm  
Damage Repair Project

BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On February 24, 2010, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), requesting Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to the proposed Highway 162 Sand Bank Grind and Replace Storm Damage Repair Project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States (U.S.) and waters of the State associated with the Eel River Unit No.111.00. The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on March 10, 2010, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. No comments were received. Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority.

**California Environmental Protection Agency**

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2. The project consists of three locations along Highway 162 at post mile (PM) 14.44, PM 16.69, and PM 19.80, in Mendocino County. During the winter of 2005/2006, several storm events contributed to the failure of these highway facilities. The purpose of the project is to restore the roadway to pre-storm conditions and improve the facility to prevent further highway deterioration. The proposed construction activities will consist of: replacing culverts; installing drop inlet vaults; grading drainage ditches and slopes adjacent to drainages; installing underdrains; replacing culverts; installing outlet down-drains; replacing asphalt and road base; re-establishing drainage flows; installing rock slope protection (RSP); and conducting slope revegetation and erosion control.
3. The project will result in temporary and permanent impacts to unnamed ephemeral tributaries of the Eel River and Middle Fork Eel River. Caltrans has determined the temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. and State would total approximately 0.03 acres (876 linear feet). However, permanent impacts are only 0.005 acres (107 linear feet). Caltrans will utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs) to provide erosion control and pollution prevention throughout the project area during construction. All graded areas within the project affected by the construction activities will be appropriately stabilized and/or replanted with appropriate native vegetation. In addition, the proposed project will restore the former drainage flow at the culvert located at PM 16.69 and reduce the amount of water that flows to the culvert at PM 16.65. These actions are likely to improve water quality by reducing the velocity of water, the sediment delivery potential, and the water temperature. Additionally, Caltrans proposes to lay back steep erodible slopes at PM 14.44 to reduce the sediment delivery potential to the Eel River.
4. The proposed project will be conducted in summer months during low flow conditions; however, a water diversion may be required. The majority of proposed project activity is scheduled to be conducted between July 31, 2010 and October 15, 2010. The entire project is expected to take 60 days to complete. The proposed in-channel work will only be conducted between June 15<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>.
5. Caltrans has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under their Nationwide Permits No. 14 (linear transportation projects) pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. In addition, Caltrans has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) for a 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement. Caltrans has determined that this project is exempt by statute from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (Class Statutory Exemption 15269 (b)(c)). In addition, Regional Water Board staff also determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review (Class 2 Categorical Exemption) and anticipates filing a Notice of Exemption.

Receiving Water: Unnamed ephemeral streams located within the Eel River Hydrologic Unit No.111.00.

Filled or Excavated Area: Permanent stream impacts: 0.005 acres new permanent impacts to waters of U.S  
Temporary stream impacts: 0.03 acres of temporary construction impacts

Total Linear Impact: Permanent stream impacts: 107 linear feet of new permanent impacts to water of U.S.  
Temporary stream impacts: 876 linear feet of temporary construction impacts to waters of U.S.

Dredge Volume: 76 cubic yards

Fill Volume : 20 cubic yards

Latitude/Longitude: 39.70833 N / 123.3528 W to 39.7152 N / 123.29722

Expiration: April 8, 2015

ACCORDINGLY, BASED ON ITS INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE RECORD, THE REGIONAL WATER BOARD CERTIFIES THAT THE CALTRANS – HIGHWAY 162 – SAND BANK GRIND AND REPLACE STORM DAMAGE REPAIR PROJECT, W DID NO. 1B10018WNME, 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 CALTRANS 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. The validity of any nondenial certification action (actions 1 and 2) shall be conditioned upon total payment of the full fee required under title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3833, unless otherwise stated in writing by the certifying agency.

4. The Regional Water Board shall be notified in writing each year at least five working days (working days are Monday – Friday) prior to the commencement of ground disturbing activities, water diversions, and significant concrete pours, with details regarding the construction schedule, in order to allow staff to be present onsite during installation and removal activities, and to answer any public inquiries that may arise regarding the project.
5. Except as may be modified by any preceding conditions, all certification actions are contingent on: a) the discharge being limited and all proposed revegetation being completed in strict compliance with the Applicant's project description, and b) compliance with all applicable requirements of the Basin Plan.
6. Caltrans shall construct the project in accordance with the project described in the application and the findings above, and shall comply with all applicable water quality standards.
7. Any change in the implementation of the project that would have a significant or material effect on the findings, conclusions, or conditions of this Order must be submitted to the Executive Officer of the Regional Water Board for prior review and written approval.
8. Caltrans shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this order.
9. Caltrans shall provide a copy of this order and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ (web link referenced below) to the contractor and all subcontractors conducting the work, and require that copies remain in their possession at the work site. Caltrans shall be responsible for work conducted by its contractor or subcontractors.
10. All activities and BMPs shall be implemented according to the submitted application and the conditions in this certification.
11. All conditions required by this Order shall be included in the Plans and Specifications prepared by Caltrans for the Contractor. In addition, Caltrans shall require compliance with all conditions included in this Order in the bid contract for this project.
12. BMPs for erosion, sediment and turbidity control shall be implemented and in place at commencement of, during and after any ground clearing activities, construction activities, or any other project activities that could result in erosion or sediment discharges to surface water. The BMPs shall be implemented in accordance with the Caltrans Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual (CCSBMPM) and all contractors and subcontractors shall comply with the CCSBMPM.

13. Caltrans shall submit, subject to approval by the Regional Water Board staff, a dewatering and/or diversion plan that appropriately describe the dewatered or diverted areas and how those areas will be handled during construction. The diversion/dewatering plans shall be submitted no later than 30 days prior to conducting the proposed activity. Information submitted shall include the area or work to be diverted or dewatered and method of the proposed activity. All diversion or dewatering activities shall be designed as to minimize the impact to waters of the State and maintain natural flows upstream and downstream. All dewatering or diversion structures shall be installed in a manner that does not cause sedimentation, siltation or erosion upstream or downstream. All dewatering or diversion structures shall be removed immediately upon completion of project activities. The in-channel work within streams will only be conducted between June 15<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>.
14. Caltrans shall take photos of all areas disturbed by project activities, including all excess materials disposal areas, after rainfall events that generate visible runoff from these areas in order to demonstrate that erosion control and revegetation measures are present and have been installed appropriately and successfully in accordance with the CCSBMPM. A brief report containing these photos shall be submitted within 60 days of the rainfall event that generated runoff from the disturbed areas. In addition, Caltrans shall provide photos of the completed work to the appropriate Regional Water Board staff person, in order to document compliance.
15. Caltrans shall utilize wildlife-friendly 100% biodegradable erosion control products. Photodegradable synthetic products are not considered biodegradable. Caltrans shall not use or allow the use of permanent erosion control products that contain synthetic (e.g., plastic or nylon) netting or materials. Permanent erosion control products are considered to be products left in place for two years or more or after the project is completed. If Caltrans finds that erosion control netting or products have entrapped or harmed wildlife at the site, the product shall be removed and replaced with wildlife-friendly biodegradable products. Caltrans shall not use or allow the use of soil stabilization products that contain synthetic materials within waters of the United States or waters of the State at any time.
16. The Resident Engineer shall hold on-site water quality permit compliance meetings (similar to tailgate safety meetings) to discuss permit compliance, including instructions on how to avoid violations and procedures for reporting violations. The meetings shall be held at least every other week, and particularly before forecasted storm events and when a new contractor or subcontractor arrives to begin work at the site. The contractors, subcontractors and their employees, as well as any inspectors or biological monitors assigned to the project, shall be present at the meetings. Caltrans shall maintain dated sign-in sheets for attendees at these meetings, and shall make them available to the Regional Water Board on request.

17. 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.
18. No debris, soil, silt, sand, bark, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete or concrete washings, welding slag, 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.
19. Water which has come into contact with wet concrete during construction shall be captured and disposed of in appropriate locations at least 100 linear feet beyond waters of the State. No excess concrete or concrete washings shall be allowed to contact waters of the State. In addition, all concrete contact water disposal locations as well as concrete washout basins shall have adequate BMPs in accordance with the CCSBMPM.
20. All materials used for cleaning concrete from tools and equipment, and any wastes generated by this activity, shall be adequately contained to prevent contact with soil and surface water and shall be disposed of properly within a clearly designated area at least 100 linear feet beyond waters of the State
21. When operations are complete, any excess material or debris shall be removed from the work area and disposed of properly and in accordance with the Special Provisions for the project and/or Standard Specification 7-1.13, Disposal of Material Outside the Highway Right of Way. Caltrans shall submit to the Regional Water Board the satisfactory evidence provided to the Caltrans engineer by the Contractor referenced in Standard Specification 7-1.13.
22. Work in flowing or standing surface waters, unless otherwise proposed in the project description and approved by the Regional Water Board, is prohibited. If construction dewatering of groundwater is found to be necessary, Caltrans shall use a method of water disposal other than disposal to surface waters (such as land disposal) or the Caltrans shall apply for coverage under the Low Threat Discharge Permit or an individual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and receive notification of coverage to discharge to surface waters, prior to the discharge.
23. Surface water monitoring shall be conducted whenever a project activity is conducted within waters of the State. Surface water monitoring shall be conducted when any project activity has the potential to or has mobilized sediment and/or alter background conditions within waters of the State. In order to demonstrate

compliance with receiving water limitations, field measurements shall be collected whenever a project activity may alter background conditions.

24. All in stream activities during construction shall conduct the following water quality monitoring as follows. Caltrans shall establish effluent, upstream (background) and downstream monitoring locations to demonstrate compliance with all applicable water quality objectives. The downstream location shall be no more than 50 feet from the effluent location. Field measurements shall be taken from each location four times daily for flow, pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, total dissolved solids, turbidity and specific conductance. In addition, visual observations shall be made four times daily and include the appearance of the discharge including color, turbidity, floating or suspended matter or debris, appearance of the receiving water at the point of discharge (occurrence of erosion and scouring, turbidity, solids deposition, unusual aquatic growth, etc), and observations about the receiving water, such as the presence of aquatic life. Measurements shall be collected from each sampling location four times daily while the diversion is being utilized.
25. Whenever, as a result of project activities, downstream measurements exceed the following water quality objectives:

pH	<6.5 or >8.5 (any changes >0.5 units)
temperature	1°F above natural background
dissolved oxygen	<7 milligrams per liter (mg/L)
total dissolved solids	>130 mg/L
turbidity	20% above natural background
specific conductance	>200 micromhos @ 77°F

Appropriate measurements shall be collected from all monitoring locations every hour during the period of increase, and shall continue until measurements demonstrate compliance with receiving water limitations and the water quality parameters are no longer increasing as a result of project activities. If any measurements are beyond the water quality objectives 50 feet downstream of the source(s), all necessary steps shall be taken to install, repair, and/or modify BMPs to control the source(s). In addition, the overall distance from the source(s) to the downstream extent of the exceedance shall be measured.

26. Monitoring results shall be reported to appropriate Regional Water Board staff person by telephone within one hour of taking any measurements that exceed the limits in condition 23 (turbidity only if it is higher than 20 NTU as well). Pictures of the tributary upstream, downstream and within the working and/or disturbed area shall be taken and submitted to the appropriate Regional Water Board staff via e-mail or fax within 24 hours of the incident. All other monitoring data shall be reported on a monthly basis and is due to the Regional Water Board by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

27. Calibration logs for all field monitoring equipment shall be maintained and be available to the Regional Water Board on request.
28. Fueling, lubrication, maintenance, storage and staging of vehicles and equipment shall be outside of waters of the United States and the State. Fueling, lubrication, maintenance, storage and staging of vehicles and equipment shall not result in a discharge or a threatened discharge to any waters of the State or the United States. At no time shall the Applicant use any vehicle or equipment which leaks any substance that may impact water quality.
29. In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this Order, 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 for the violation or threatened violation constitutes a limitation necessary to assure compliance with the water quality standards and other pertinent requirements incorporated into this Order. In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this certification, the State Water Board may require the holder of any federal permit or license subject to this Order to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the State 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 Order, the Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this Order as appropriate to ensure compliance.
30. 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 or approved pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act or section 303 of the Clean Water Act.
31. The Eel River watershed is listed on the State of California Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list as impaired for sediment and temperature. Given that roads are a responsible source of sediment in the watershed (directly, from surface erosion, and, indirectly, by triggering landslides) a good first step can be made by focusing on reducing sediment from roads in the watershed. Reducing road-related sediment should be made a high priority. In addition, activities that impact the riparian zone and riparian vegetation are identified as sources contributing to increased stream temperatures. At present, there are no watershed-specific Total Daily Maximum Load (TMDL) implementation plans for this watershed. If a TMDL implementation plan is adopted prior to the expiration date of this Order, the Regional Water Board may revise the provisions of this Order to address actions identified in such action plan.

32. This Order is not transferable. 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. The successor-in-interest must send to the Regional Water Board Executive Officer a written request for transfer of this Order to discharge dredged or fill material under this Order. The request must contain the following:
- a. requesting entity's full legal name
  - b. the state of incorporation, if a corporation
  - c. address and phone number of contact person
  - d. description of any changes to the project or confirmation that the successor-in-interest intends to implement the project as described in this Order.
33. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on April 08, 2015. Conditions and monitoring requirements outlined in this Order are not subject to the expiration date outlined above, and remain in full effect and are enforceable.
34. Please contact Jeremiah Puget of our staff at (707) 576-2835 or [jpuget@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:jpuget@waterboards.ca.gov) if you have any questions.

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Catherine Kuhlman  
Executive Officer

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Web link: 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 can be found at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/water\\_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0017.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0017.pdf)

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