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**California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region  
Geoffrey M. Hales, Chairman**

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Edmund G. Brown, Jr.,  
Governor

June 7, 2011

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In the Matter of

**Water Quality Certification**

for the

**TRAVIS RANCH, LLC – BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS AT TWO STREAM CROSSINGS  
FOR RANCH ACCESS  
WDID No. 1B11015WNTR**

APPLICANT: Travis Ranch, LLC  
RECEIVING WATER: Hulls Creek and unnamed tributary to North Fork Eel River  
HYDROLOGIC AREA: North Fork Eel River Hydrologic Area No. 111.50  
COUNTY: Trinity  
FILE NAME: Travis Ranch LLC – Bridge Replacement at Crossings 1 and 2 for Ranch Access

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BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On February 1, 2011, Mr. Jeremy Heidrick, representing Travis Ranch, LLC, (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 removal and replacement of two bridges for Travis Ranch access. The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on May 12, 2011, 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 is located in southern Trinity County approximately 22 miles north of Covelo. The project involves improvement of two creek crossings, one on Hulls Creek and one on an unnamed tributary to North Fork Eel River. The Hulls Creek crossing (Crossing 1) is located on BLM property and private property owned by the Pierce Ranch. Crossing 2 (unnamed tributary to North Fork Eel River) is

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located on BLM property. Access to these bridge crossings is provided by Hulls Creek Road which extends northward from the Mendocino County line and is maintained by Trinity County for approximately two miles before becoming a private road that includes these stream crossings. This southern route has historically provided access to Travis Ranch from the south and west.

3. The existing summer low-water crossing on Hulls Creek bypasses an existing deteriorated suspension bridge. The bridge was reported to have been constructed by Trinity County Department of Transportation for former inhabitants of Travis Ranch. The suspension bridge is 160-foot long and 8-foot wide with a wood deck. Portions of the wood deck are missing and the bridge creates a hazard in its current state. Several concrete blocks that are visible along the Hulls Creek channel are believed to be the remnants of a former bridge at this location that was destroyed during the flood of 1964. The bridge at Crossing 1 will replace the existing suspension bridge in approximately the same alignment.
4. The new bridge at Crossing 1 will consist of a 190-foot long and 10-foot wide free span Bailey-style bridge designed for light vehicles. The bridge is a prefabricated product that has been designed for a maximum vehicle load of 10,000 pounds. The bridge abutments will be supported on pre-fabricated concrete slab abutments. The bridge will span Hulls Creek from top of bank to top of bank with the deck elevation designed above the 100-year water surface elevation. Minor grading will be required to realign the roadway approaches at both ends. Grading of the abutment areas will impact upland vegetation that will be replaced in accordance with a Revegetation Plan. Construction of Crossing 1 will not result in any permanent impacts to waters of the United States.
5. A temporary launching tower will be placed along the southern edge of the streambed below the bridge at Crossing 1 in order to temporarily support the underside of the bridge during installation. The temporary launching tower consists of a steel framework that will be assembled on the roadway and lowered from the top of the creek bank onto a temporary work area located on the streambed. The launching tower is approximately 9 feet on each side and 32 feet tall. A temporary sandbag coffer dam will be installed around the base of the support tower to isolate the work area and deflect any stream flows away from the temporary work area and into the main stream channel. The streambed within the isolated sand bag area will be leveled with hand tools as necessary. The launch tower base may also be shimmed and leveled with wood timbers.
6. Upon completion of the project the temporary work area will be restored to mimic pre-project conditions and to ensure that the disturbed area is sloped toward the main channel with no depressions. The temporary work area may temporarily dewater a 10-foot wide and up to 100-foot long area along the south streambank without cutting off the flow through the main portion of the creek channel. The

temporary support tower work area will result in temporary impacts to 100 square feet and 10 linear feet of streambed.

7. Crossing 2 is located approximately 1,500 feet north of Crossing 1 on an unnamed tributary to the North Fork Eel River. Crossing 2 consists of an existing 60-foot long and 12-foot wide free span railcar bridge supported by log abutments located above the ordinary high water elevation. The existing bridge is deteriorated and unsafe for crossing so only the summer creek crossing is currently being used. The project includes removal of the existing bridge and log abutments. The existing bridge will be replaced by an 80-foot long and 10-foot wide free span pre-manufactured bridge deck supported by pre-cast concrete abutments. The new bridge is designed to span the unnamed stream from top of bank to top of bank with the deck elevation designed above the 100-year water surface elevation.
8. Activities at Crossing 2 do not involve excavation or the placement of fill material within waters of the United States. Potential temporary impacts at Crossing 2 are associated with the potential for materials to dislodge and fall into the stream channel during removal of the existing bridge and log abutments. Any material that falls into the channel during the project will be removed. Rock riprap will be installed around the Crossing 2 bridge abutments. The "riprap" will consist of cobbles placed immediately around the abutments to provide additional stabilization around the disturbed footing areas.
9. Compensatory mitigation is not required for the project. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and erosion control. The project will not result in any permanent impacts to waters of the United States. The project is scheduled to begin in September 2011.
10. The Applicant has applied for authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Applicant has also applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game.
11. The Regional Water Board, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review, section 15302 – replacement or reconstruction, pursuant to CEQA. The Regional Water Board will file a Notice of Exemption in accordance with the California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15602 after issuance of this order.
12. The North Fork Eel River Technical Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for sediment and temperature were established in 2002 by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in accordance with section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, because the State of California determined that the water quality standards for the North Fork Eel River are exceeded due to excessive sediment

and temperature. Roads and bank erosion are identified as sources contributing to the sediment impairment. In addition, activities that impact the riparian zone and reduce riparian vegetation are identified as sources contributing to increased stream temperatures. The primary adverse impacts associated with excessive temperature and sediment in the North Fork Eel River pertain to cold freshwater habitat, primarily anadromous salmonid habitat. Activities authorized by this certification require implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and turbidity control, and implementation of impact avoidance measures as described above. Accordingly, the project is consistent with, and implements portions of the Middle Fork Eel River TMDL.

13. The federal antidegradation policy requires that state water quality standards include an antidegradation policy consistent with the federal policy. The State Water Board established California's antidegradation policy in State Water Board Resolution No. 68-16. Resolution No. 68-16 incorporates the federal antidegradation policy where the federal policy applies under federal law. Resolution No. 68-16 requires that existing quality of waters be maintained unless degradation is justified based on specific findings. The Regional Water Board's Basin Plan implements, and incorporates by reference, both the state and federal antidegradation policies. This Order is consistent with applicable federal and state antidegradation policies, as it does not authorize the discharge of increased concentrations of pollutants or increased volumes of treated wastewater, and does not otherwise authorize degradation of the waters affected by this project.
14. 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 Waters: North Fork Eel River in the North Fork Eel River Hydrologic Area No. 111.50

Filled or Excavated Area: Area Temporarily Impacted: 1000 square feet of streambed  
Area Permanently Impacted: None

Total Linear Impacts: Length Temporarily Impacted: 100 linear feet of streambed  
Length Permanently Impacted: None

Dredge Volume: None

Latitude/Longitude: Crossing 1: 40.0030 N/123.2718 W  
Crossing 2: 40.0069 N/123.2696 W

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the Travis Ranch, LLC – Bridge Replacements at Two Stream Crossing for Ranch Access Project (WDID No.1B11015WNTR), 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:

**All conditions of this order apply to the Applicant (and all their employees) and all contractors (and their employees), sub-contractors (and their employees), and any other entity or agency that performs activities or work on the project as related to this Water Quality Certification.**

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 this certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3833, and owed by the Applicant.
4. The Regional Water Board staff 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. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this certification.
6. 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. 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 action(s).

7. The Applicant 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 as detailed in the Basin Plan.
8. 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 waters. All BMPs shall be installed properly and in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
9. The Applicant shall prioritize the use of wildlife-friendly biodegradable (not photo-degradable) erosion control products wherever feasible. The Applicant shall not use or allow the use of erosion control products that contain synthetic materials within waters of the United States or waters of the State at any time. The Applicant shall not use or allow the use of erosion control products that contain synthetic netting for permanent erosion control (i.e. erosion control materials to be left in place for two years or after the completion date of the project). If the Applicant finds that erosion control netting or products have entrapped or harmed wildlife, personnel shall remove the netting or product and replace it with wildlife-friendly biodegradable products. The Applicant shall request approval from the Regional Water Board if an exception from this requirement is needed for a specific location.
10. Disturbance or removal of existing vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the project.
11. This Water Quality Certification does not authorize the Applicant to draft surface waters.
12. 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.
13. Fueling, lubrication, maintenance, storage, and staging of vehicles and equipment shall not result in a discharge or threatened discharge to any waters of the State including dry portions of the streambank and streambed. At no time shall the Applicant or its contractors allow use of any vehicle or equipment, which leaks any substance that may impact water quality.
14. 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

including stopping work. 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.

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. 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.
17. 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.

18. 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).

19. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on November 15, 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.

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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Weblink: 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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Cc: Mr. Jeremy Svehla, Winzler & Kelly, 633 Third Street, Eureka, CA 95501

Electronic  
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