



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

**Geoffrey M. Hales, Chairman**

**Matt Rodriguez**  
Secretary for  
Environmental Protection

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**Edmund G. Brown Jr.**  
Governor

December 29, 2011

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In the Matter of

**Water Quality Certification**

for the

**Eureka Sand and Gravel Company – Mad River Aggregate Extraction at  
Emmerson, Christie, Johnson, Johnson/Spini & O'Neill Bars  
WDID No. 1B05068WNHU**

APPLICANT: Eureka Sand and Gravel Company  
RECEIVING WATER: Mad River  
HYDROLOGIC UNIT: Mad River Hydrologic Unit No. 109.00  
COUNTY: Humboldt  
FILE NAME: Eureka Sand & Gravel – Christie, Johnson/Spini, & O'Neill  
Bars

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BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On March 8, 2010, the Eureka Sand and Gravel Company (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 gravel (river-run aggregate) extraction operations on the Mad River between the City of Arcata and the City of Blue Lake in Humboldt County. The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on April 23, 2010, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. We did not receive any public comments on the project and certification was issued to the Applicant on June 15, 2010.
2. On August 13, 2010, Granite Construction Company (Granite) filed an application for 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 gravel (river-run aggregate) extraction operations at the Emmerson, Blue Lake and Johnson Bars on the Mad River near Glendale and the City of Blue Lake. The Regional Water Board

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provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on September 3, 2010, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. We did not receive any public comments on the project and certification (WDID No. 1B02120WNHU) was issued to Granite on September 29, 2010.

3. On August 11, 2011, the Regional Water Board received a letter from Granite regarding a change in ownership and/or lease responsibility applicable to their authorized Mad River gravel mining operations at the Emmerson, Blue Lake, and Johnson gravel bars. The letter states that Granite has sold the Johnson gravel bar and transferred lease responsibility for the Emmerson gravel bar to the Applicant.
4. On August 12, 2011, the Regional Water Board received a letter from the Applicant requesting the transfer of Granite's certification (WDID No. 1B02120WNHU) and authorization to conduct future gravel extraction operations at the Emmerson and Johnson gravel bars. Granite's certification (WDID No. 1B02120WNHU) for Mad River Aggregate Extraction could not be transferred to the Applicant because that Order included authorization for gravel extraction activities at the Blue Lake Bar which is not owned or controlled by the Applicant. This certification amends the Applicant's previous certification for Mad River Aggregate Extraction at Christie, Johnson/Spini and O'Neill Bars (WDID No. 1B05068WNHU) to include authorization for gravel extraction activities at the Emmerson Bar and Johnson Bar.
5. The Applicant's Mad River aggregate extraction operations affect five separate gravel bars. The Emmerson Bar covers approximately 80 acres and is located approximately 0.3 miles upstream of the Hatchery Road Bridge over the Mad River. The Christie Bar is approximately 175 acres located south of Glendale. The Johnson Bar covers approximately 40 acres and is located approximately one mile downstream of the Blue Lake Bar near Glendale. The Johnson/Spini Bar is located immediately downstream of the Highway 299 bridge over the Mad River. The O'Neill Bar is located just downstream of the Johnson/Spini Bar and adjacent to the Applicant's concrete batch plant facility on Boyd Road in Arcata. The Johnson/Spini Bar and O'Neill Bar total approximately 90 acres. Aggregate extraction operations at the Christie Bar, Johnson/Spini Bar, and O'Neill Bar typically cover up to 12 acres, 10 acres and 2.5 acres, respectively. The total volume of aggregate authorized for extraction from all these bars combined is up to 78,900 cubic yards annually. Annual aggregate extraction operations at the Emmerson and Johnson bars will typically disturb 15 acres or less. The maximum annual volume of aggregate authorized for extraction from these two bars is up to 30,000 cubic yards annually. The actual volume removed and the specific area of extraction within each gravel bar varies from year-to-year.
6. Aggregate excavation is conducted with scrapers, dozers, excavators, loaders, and dump trucks. The permitted extraction season is typically from June 1 to October 31. Summer crossing installation and use is allowed between June 31 and

September 15. Summer crossings consist of railroad flatcars on concrete block and clean gravel-fill abutments. Summer crossings are located to avoid potential fish spawning, holding and rearing habitat. Appropriate crossing locations are typically shallow low-velocity waters located away from riffle crests and pools. Temporary stockpiling of excavated material within the limits of the extraction area is allowed through October 15 when stockpiles must be removed above Ordinary High Water. The Applicant hauls the excavated materials to an aggregate processing facility on upland property adjacent to the Christie Bar that also has a concrete batch plant and truck shop. The Applicant also operates a concrete batch plant and truck shop adjacent to the O'Neill Bar in Arcata.

7. After the Applicant has removed the aggregate to the approved extraction design lines and grades, the extraction area is regraded as necessary to leave no depressions or berms that may potentially trap fish or cause impacts to surrounding habitats. The Applicant's consultant will conduct a site visit at the conclusion of extraction operations and provide any additional recommendations reflecting seasonal extraction plan and reclamation plan conformity. When the final surfaces of the site are graded for seasonal reclamation, the operator may remove the summer crossings and leave the bankfull channel area to the natural reclamation process, which occurs during the high-flow events of the following winter. The extraction season typically ends on October 15, unless agencies agree to grant an extension of the season. The Applicant will implement mitigation and impact avoidance measures during the aggregate extraction processes including; maintenance and inspection of equipment, maintaining vertical and horizontal offsets from the live channel to ensure low-flow channel confinement, maintaining sufficient water depth for fish, minimizing impacts to water quality, limiting the number wet crossings, limiting the amount of haul roads providing access to the channel extraction areas, and use of clean washed gravel and concrete blocks for construction of temporary crossings.
8. Previous aggregate extraction operations on the Applicant's gravel bars were regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Letter of Permission (LOP) procedure (LOP 2004-1) pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. LOP 2004-1 expired in 2004 and the ACOE issued a five-year individual section 404 permit consistent with LOP 2004-1 that authorized the Applicant to annually extract up to 78,900 cubic yards of aggregate from these gravel bars, and to construct summer low-flow channel crossings as needed. The Applicant's individual section 404 permit coverage expired following the 2008 extraction season. There was no authorized aggregate extraction from the Mad River in 2009.
9. In February 2009 the ACOE issued a public notice describing the proposal to modify LOP 2004-1. Under a new LOP 2009, as well as the expired LOP 2004-1, each gravel mining operator is required to comply with standardized procedures and receive an operator specific LOP. A Letter of Modification to the LOP is required for each subsequent year's extraction activities. The Applicant has applied (File Nos. 2009-0013 & 0014) for authorization from the USACOE to

perform the proposed future activities. The USACOE may regulate the proposed activities under a new LOP 2009 or under individual section 404 permit.

10. The Applicant applies to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) for Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreements (1600 Agreement) on an annual basis after receiving approval of their annual extraction plans by the County of Humboldt Extraction Review Team, CDF&G, ACOE, and NOAA Fisheries.
11. The Applicant conducts aggregate extraction operations under conditions of the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for Gravel Removal from the Lower Mad River. The CDF&G, as a responsible California Environmental Quality Act agency, filed Notice of Determinations for Supplemental PEIRs for the Johnson/Spini and O'Neill Bars on June 14, 2006, and the Christie Bar on June 27, 2006. On April 2, 2009, Humboldt County Department of Community Development Services, as lead agency for CEQA, completed a Final Supplemental to the PEIR (SCH# 1990283049) and filed a Notice of Completion with the State Clearinghouse on April 7, 2009. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental documents and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.
12. The Mad River Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for sediment and turbidity was established in 2007 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 Mad River are exceeded due to excessive sediment and turbidity. Roads and bank erosion are identified as sources contributing to the sediment impairment. The primary adverse impacts associated with excessive sediment and turbidity in the Mad River pertain to cold freshwater habitat, primarily anadromous salmonid habitat. Actions authorized by this Order require implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment control at temporary stream crossings, and activities intended to enhance habitat for salmonids and other aquatic species such as alcove/wetland extractions designed to sequester silt and harbor willows. Accordingly, this Order is consistent with, and implements portions of the Mad River TMDL.
13. 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: Mad River in the Mad River Hydrologic Unit No. 109.00

Filled or Excavated Area: Area Temporarily Impacted: 40 acres of stream channel  
Area Permanently Impacted: None

Total Linear Impacts: Length Temporarily Impacted: None  
Length Permanently Impacted: None

Dredge Volume: None

Latitude/Longitude: Emmerson Bar: 40.873 N/123.991 W  
Christie Bar: 40.892 N/124.018 W  
Johnson Bar: 40.893 N/124.020 W  
Johnson/Spini Bar: 40.913 N/124.065 W  
O'Neill Bar: 40.910 N/124.075 W

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the Eureka Sand and Gravel Company – Mad River Aggregate Extraction Operations at Emmerson, Christie, Johnson, Johnson/Spini, and O'Neill Bars (WDID No. 1B05068WNHU), 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. A base fee has already been paid and no additional base fee is required during the term of this Order. Prior to initiating any aggregate mining project, the Applicant shall submit a volume based fee in an amount determined in accordance with the fee schedule contained in California Code of Regulations, Division 3, Chapter 9, Article 1, section 2200(a)(3). The volume based fee payment (check payable to the State Water Resources Control Board) shall be accompanied by a transmittal letter that includes the WDID Number for this Order, the applicable aggregate mining season (year), the volume of aggregate that will be removed during the applicable aggregate mining season, and the volume of aggregate that was mined during the previous aggregate mining season. If/when the actual volume of aggregate mined is less than the amount the Applicant used to calculate the previously paid fee; a corresponding fee credit shall be applied to the total fee that is owed prior to additional mining during the following aggregate mining season or mining event. If/when the actual volume of aggregate mined was more than the amount the Applicant used to calculate the previously paid fee; a corresponding

fee debit shall be applied to the fees that are owed prior to additional mining during the following aggregate mining season or mining event. Any fee debit amounts owed from a completed mining event shall be added to the applicable fee balance and included with the annual fee for the following season or mining event. If/when an Applicant owes additional fees for aggregate that has already been mined, and mining will not occur during the following mining season, the Applicant shall submit by August 1 of the following year, a transmittal letter indicating that no extraction will occur during the identified extraction season and the balance owed to cover any fee debit that resulted following the previous mining event. Failure to submit the applicable fee and any additional fee (debit fee) prior to the start of any subsequent aggregate mining activities is a violation of this Order.

5. The Regional Water Board shall be notified at least five working days (working days are Monday – Friday) prior to the commencement of ground disturbing activities, with details regarding the schedule for aggregate mining activities, in order to allow staff to be present onsite during construction, and to answer any public inquiries that may arise regarding the project.
6. Discharges shall not cause or threaten to cause pollution, contamination, or nuisance as defined in CWC Section 13050.
7. Discharges shall not adversely impact human health or the environment or the beneficial uses of water set out in the Basin Plan.
8. Discharges are authorized only where they do not cause or contribute to a violation or exceedance of applicable water quality standards, prohibitions, or policies in the Basin Plan, and are controlled through implementation of appropriate design and management measures for prevention and minimization of waste discharges.
9. Discharge of process wastewater or solids from aggregate washing activities to surface waters is prohibited.
10. Discharge of process wastewater from concrete production and washout activities to surface water or ground water is prohibited.
11. Discharge of process wastewater from asphalt production and associated air pollution control equipment to surface water or ground water is prohibited.
12. Activities shall not cause the turbidity of the receiving waters to be increased more than 20 percent above naturally occurring background levels.
13. The activities shall not cause the receiving waters to contain floating materials, including solids, liquids, foams, and scum, in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses.

14. Fueling, lubrication, maintenance, and storage of vehicles and equipment shall not result in a discharge or a threatened discharge to surface waters or ground water. At no time shall the discharger use vehicles or equipment that leaks any substance that might impact water quality. Staging and storage areas for vehicles and equipment shall be located outside of the bed, channel, and bank of any waters of the State.
15. No debris, soil, silt, sand, bark, slash, sawdust, 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.
16. Permanent haul roads shall follow existing routes to the extent possible. Temporary haul roads shall avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands and riparian vegetation to the extent possible.
17. BMPs for sediment and turbidity control shall be implemented and in place prior to and during each season's extraction activities, and as necessary after extraction activities are completed each season in order to ensure that no silt or sediment enters surface waters.
18. Upon completion of annual aggregate extraction activities, the gravel bar shall be left in a condition that is free-draining and free of depressions in order to reduce impacts to fish and wildlife species, unless a different configuration of the gravel bar is authorized by the ACOE.
19. Accumulated solids (fines) shall be removed from aggregate wash water percolation basins and moved to an appropriate location for disposal, storage, or reuse prior to inundation of percolation basins by surface waters and the area occupied by percolation basins must be restored to pre-existing slopes and contours prior to inundation by surface waters.
20. All activities and BMPs shall be implemented according to the submitted application and the conditions in this certification.
21. 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.
22. 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.

23. 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.
24. 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.
25. 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.
26. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this certification.
27. 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.
28. 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.

29. 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).
30. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on June 15, 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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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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