
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

May 22, 2014

In the Matter of

Water Quality Certification

for

Humboldt County DPW – Holmes-Larabee Temporary Low-Water Crossing Detour Project
WDID No. 1B14036WNHU

APPLICANT: Humboldt County Public Works Department,
Andrew Bundschuh

RECEIVING WATER: Eel River

HYDROLOGIC UNIT: Eel River Hydrologic Unit, Larabee Creek Hydrologic
Sub-Area 111.13

COUNTY: Humboldt

FILE NAME: Humboldt County DPW – Holmes-Larabee Temporary Low-
Water Crossing Detour Project

BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On April 21, 2014, the Humboldt County Public Works Department, Andrew Bundschuh (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 annual installation and removal of the Humboldt County DPW – Holmes-Larabee Temporary Low-Water Crossing Detour Project (Project). Information describing the Project was noticed for public comment on the Regional Water Board's website on April 28, 2014. We received no comments. The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated

with the Eel River within the Larabee Creek Hydrologic Sub-Area No. 111.13. The Project is located at approximately Holmes Flat Road, Post Mile 1.68, Redcrest, Humboldt County, at latitude 40.420021°N, and longitude 123.935499°W. The Water Quality Certification previously issued for Holmes-Larabee seasonal bridge activities on February 21, 2013, includes activities associated with these proposed activities. The Project will cause no permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. Temporary impacts to the Eel River channel bed and bank, waters of the U.S., would be approximately 80 linear feet (0.50 acres).

2. The Holmes-Larabee Low-Water Crossing is located at the crossing of Holmes Flat Road over the Eel River and immediately downstream of the confluence of Larabee Creek. This crossing is necessary to provide community access and emergency services during summer months when access roads to the community are closed to residents and public by logging companies. The permanent portions of the existing bridge structure were originally constructed by the Pacific Lumber Company in 1937, to provide access to farms, ranches, residences, and timberland on the east side of the Eel River. Humboldt County acquired the bridge and associated right-of-way in 1959.

To date the Holmes-Larabee summer low-water crossing included a permitted 90-foot long by 12-foot wide temporary flatcar bridge crossing, installed annually, over a secondary flow channel feature located along the right (east) bank, and the permanent low-water bridge crossing constructed in 1937. During a routine bridge inspection in December 2013, it was determined that the permanent bridge was in such poor condition that immediate closure was recommended. While Humboldt County conducts repairs (possibly 2 – 3 years) a temporary detour will be installed to provide access to the public and emergency services for residents during summer months. In addition to the installation of the permitted 90-foot long by 12-foot wide temporary flatcar bridge crossing over a secondary flow channel feature located along the right (east) bank, the county proposes to install a temporary crossing over the Eel River main channel to complete the crossing to the west bank. The county proposes to annually install a Bailey bridge over the main channel for use during most of the summer months, followed by a flatcar bridge during the late summer as the Bailey bridge is removed.

Proposed Project activities include grading 0.50 acres of gravel bar to form an access road to the western crossing as well as excavation of aggregate material from the adjacent dry gravel bar creating the approaches and abutments for the bridges. Following annual bridge removal, the aggregate materials used in the approach ramps will be returned to the borrow area and graded to ensure that runoff will drain toward the river channel in the downstream direction. The proposed Project does not require vegetation removal.

3. The proposed Project may temporarily impact approximately 80 linear feet (0.50 acre) of the river channel bed and bank including the fill area of the bridge

approaches and the aggregate borrow area. The proposed Project is not anticipated to result in any permanent impacts to the channel and compensatory mitigation is not required. Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control, operation of heavy equipment near a river, as well as, aquatic species and habitat protection are proposed to avoid and minimize temporary impacts.

4. The Project proposes to install the bridge on June 15 and remove it in October or November each year, depending on weather conditions and flows in the Eel River. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDF&W) begins assessing the date of bridge removal on October 15. The date of bridge removal may be extended by CDF&W on a weekly basis if dry weather conditions continue past October 15.
5. The Applicant has obtained authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 (permit No. 268971N). The Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement.
6. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15301 (c)(d) Existing Facilities, and will file a Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse concurrent with issuance of the 401 Water Quality Certification, pursuant to CEQA guidelines.
7. The Eel River is identified as impaired for sediment and temperature under Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Bank erosion is identified as a source contributing to the sediment impairment. Removal of riparian vegetation is identified as a source contributing to temperature impairment. Activities that will be authorized by this Order are designed to reduce removal of riparian vegetation and reduce sediment discharges from bank erosion. Accordingly, this Order is consistent with, and implements, BMPs that would attenuate sediment and temperature adverse impacts.
8. Pursuant to Regional Water Board Resolution R1-2004-0087, Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Policy Statement for Sediment-Impaired Receiving Waters within the North Coast Region (Sediment TMDL Implementation Policy), the Executive Officer is directed to "rely on the use of all available authorities, including existing regulatory standards, and permitting and enforcement tools to more effectively and efficaciously pursue compliance with sediment-related standards by all dischargers of sediment waste."
9. 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.

10. 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. (Weblink attached below).

Receiving Water: Eel River,
Eel River Hydrologic Unit, Larabee Creek Hydrologic
Sub-Area 111.13

Channel and Shoreline
Discharge: Permanent impact to waters of the U.S. and State: None

Temporary impact to waters of the U.S. and State:
0.50 acres or 80 linear feet

Latitude/Longitude: 40.420021°N / 123.935499°W

Expiration: May 22, 2019

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the Humboldt County DPW – Holmes-Larabee Temporary Low-Water Crossing Detour Project (WDID No. 1B14036WNHU), 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 of 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 shall be notified at least five working days (working days are Monday – Friday) prior to the commencement of bridge installation or removal.
5. The Project shall not take material for the roadway approach or abutments from the head of the bar or at the waterline. Following annual bridge removal the Project site shall be restored to pre-project condition. The applicant shall implement measures identified in the application submitted to the Regional Water Board on April 21, 2014, to avoid and minimize direct and indirect impacts to the Eel River. Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control and operation of heavy equipment near a river, as well as, aquatic species and habit protection shall be implemented to avoid and minimize temporary impacts.
6. Applicant shall prioritize the use of wildlife-friendly 100% biodegradable erosion control products/BMPs whenever feasible. For purposes of this Order, photodegradable synthetic products are not considered biodegradable. Applicant shall not use or allow the use of erosion control products that contain synthetic (e.g., plastic or nylon) netting or materials 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, the Applicant shall remove the netting or product and replace it with wildlife-friendly biodegradable products. Applicant shall remove any remaining synthetic netting or materials remaining at the end of two years, or sooner.
7. BMPs shall be implemented as proposed in the application materials. 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. Severe and unseasonal rain events are becoming more frequent due to the effects of climate change. Therefore, BMPs shall be immediately available for deployment at all times to prevent discharges to waters of the state.

8. 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.
9. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the Project site to document compliance with this certification.
10. If, at any time, an unauthorized discharge to surface water (including wetlands, lakes, 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.
11. 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).
12. All Project work shall be conducted as described in this Order and in the application submitted by the Applicant, and shall comply with all applicable water quality standards as detailed in the Basin Plan. 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.
13. The Applicant shall provide a copy of this Order and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ to any contractor(s), subcontractor(s), and utility company(ies) conducting work on the Project, and shall require that copies remain in their possession at the work site. The Applicant shall be responsible for ensuring that all work conducted by its contractor(s), subcontractor(s), and utility companies is performed in accordance with the information provided by the Applicant to the Regional Water Board.
14. Disturbance or removal of existing vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the Project.
15. 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 shoreline. 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.

16. 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.
17. 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.
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 email a copy of the letter to the following email address: NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov.

To discharge dredged or fill material under this Order, the successor-in-interest must email to the Regional Water Board Executive Officer at NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov 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. 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 May 22, 2019. 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 Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.

Original signed by Fred Blatt for

Matthias St. John
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

Original to: Mr. Andrew Bundschuh, Humboldt County Department of Public Works,
1106 Second Street, Eureka, CA 95501

Electronic

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