
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

August 2, 2016

Mr. Grant Davis
Sonoma County Water Agency
404 Aviation Boulevard
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Grant.Davis@scwa.ca.gov

Dear Mr. Davis:

Subject: Amendment to the Federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, Water Quality Certification for the Sonoma County Water Agency Russian River Estuary Management Project

File: Sonoma County Water Agency Russian River Estuary Management Project
WDID No. 1B10122WNSO, ECM PIN CW-253580

On May 24, 2016, we received your request to amend the May 14, 2014, Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (Certification) for the Sonoma County Water Agency Russian River Estuary Management Project.

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Water Agency) proposed to revise the Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting Plan (WQMRP) for the Russian River Estuary Management Project, cited in the Certification and requires conditional amendment and approval by the Executive Officer. The conditions of the Certification require a monitoring and reporting plan as well as additional focused water quality sampling related to contact recreation in the Russian River Estuary and maximum backwater area between Jenner and Vacation Beach. In 2016, the Water Agency was mandated by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to incorporate specific monitoring and reporting requirements on the mainstem of the Russian River into the Estuary Plan, in order to meet requirements of the Temporary Urgent Change (TUC) Orders. This Certification condition amendment approves the revised final Estuary Plan that incorporates requirements from the TUC into the Estuary Plan. Specifically, changes requested and approved by the Executive Officer include revisions and requirements of the TUC Orders from the SWRCB to include monitoring and reporting to evaluate potential changes to water quality and availability of

habitat for aquatic resources in the freshwater and estuary portions of the Russian River resulting from the proposed changes to minimum instream flows that are also required by the NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinion. As part of that effort, the Water Agency will conduct nutrient and cyanobacteria-related monitoring and sampling in coordination with the Regional Water Board and as detailed in Appendix G of the Estuary Plan. Monitoring shall be conducted in accordance with Appendix E – California Watershed Assessment Manual, Volume II – Periphyton.

In response to your request, this letter serves as an amendment to Condition 4 of the Certification, allowing a modification of the Estuary Plan described in the Certification as outlined below:

4. A draft water quality monitoring plan was submitted on December 23, 2013, which includes datasonde deployment, nutrient/bacterial/algal sampling, and sediment chemistry and benthic community indices. Regional Water Board staff issued a letter to SCWA on April 1, 2014, detailing the Regional Water Board's requirements for a water quality monitoring plan. A final water quality monitoring and reporting plan (WQMRP) was submitted to the Regional Water Board by July 15, 2014, for approval by the Executive Officer. The WQMRP was revised to incorporate monitoring requirements of the Temporary Urgent Change Order issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. The Applicant shall implement the final approved *Water Quality Monitoring Plan for the Russian River Estuary Management Project*, submitted by SCWA on June 30, 2016, including the addition of *Appendices G and E*.

I hereby issue an amendment to the project description in Condition 4 of the Certification for the Sonoma County Water Agency Russian River Estuary Management Project (WDID No. 1B10122WNSO), certifying that the remainder of the Water Quality Certification findings and conditions of the May 14, 2014, Order are still valid.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.

Sincerely,

Matthias St. John
Executive Officer

Attachments: WQ Mon Plan_August_2014_2016_Revisions_QAPP_FINAL.pdf,
APPENDIX E, CWAM_II_4_Periphyton.pdf,
Appendix G_algae protocol wadeable_Mainstem_FINAL.pdf

cc: Jessica Martini-Lamb, Water Agency, Jessica.Martini.Lamb@scwa.ca.gov
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