
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

June 14, 2016

Mr. Trevor George
Sonoma Land Trust
822 Fifth Street
Santa Rosa, CA, 95404
trevor@sonomalandtrust.org

Dear Mr. George:

Subject: Notice of Applicability (NOA) for Coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects SB12006GN

File: Sonoma Land Trust - Live Oaks Ranch Bridge Replacement Project; ECM PIN CW-824643; WDID No. 1B16573WNSO

This letter is to certify coverage of Sonoma Land Trust's *Live Oaks Ranch Bridge Replacement Project* (project) under the General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects; Order No. SB12006GN (General 401 Order). The project includes replacing an existing bridge that presents a fish passage barrier with a new free spanning bridge that will not impede fish passage.

Subsequent phases of the Sonoma Land Trust's restoration efforts on Bidwell Creek at Live Oaks Ranch will include a riparian enhancement and flood plain restoration project that will extend from the new bridge to an area extending downstream several hundred feet.

Background

On May 13, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received a Notice of Intent (NOI) from the Sonoma Land Trust (Applicant) to comply with the terms of, and obtain project coverage under, the General 401 Order for the project.

Project Inspection

On March 15, 2016, Regional Water Board staff participated in an inspection of the proposed project. Also present during the inspection were David Noren of EBA Engineering, and Trevor George and Bob Neale of the Sonoma Land Trust.

Several modifications to the original NOI were requested by agency staff following the inspection. All of the requested modifications were adequately addressed in a supplementary information package received by the Regional Water Board on May 13, 2016.

Project Location

The project is located at 18775 Foss Hill Road approximately four miles northwest of the city of Calistoga in Sonoma County, California, within the Middle Russian River Hydrologic Unit 114.25, at 38.6091° N, 122.6461° W.

Project Description

The goal of the project is to replace an existing bridge/culvert array that presents a fish passage barrier with a new free spanning bridge that will not impede fish passage. The project includes the construction of two concrete abutments within the bed and bank of the creek above the ordinary high water mark. The new bridge will be 16 feet wide and approximately 35 feet long, and will be located just downstream of the existing crossing. The bridge structure will include steel structural members with a concrete deck supported at each end by concrete foundations. Concrete retaining walls will extend from the foundations to support the creek bank. Rock slope protection (RSP) will be placed along the banks under the bridge and adjacent to the wing walls extending both up and down stream of the concrete foundations.

The existing crossing will be removed after construction of the new bridge. The existing crossing consists of four cemented-in-place 48-inch diameter corrugated metal culverts, creek-spanning steel beams, and a gravel road surface. The existing crossing features mortared rock wing walls that have scoured and have become undermined. An approximately 2-foot deep plunge pool is present on the downstream side of the existing crossing. This pool will be filled in with sorted, native material to maintain the existing grade of 2.1 percent throughout the reach of Bidwell Creek. Fill materials will consist of durable river rock with a minimal amount of fines or soil and will be generated from the excavation of the new bridge abutments and removal of the existing bridge.

The project area is approximately 12,200 square feet (0.28 acres). Work within the project area includes construction of the new bridge, removal of the existing crossing, regrading of the creek channel and banks, regrading of the access road transitions on the bridge approaches, and a temporary construction staging area. The disturbed area within the stream bed and bank is approximately 3,000 square feet (0.07 acres) and has been identified as waters of the US and waters of the state.

The new bridge will include two concrete abutments that will be constructed within the banks of the creek outside the ordinary high water mark. Work associated with the abutments will include excavation of the creek bank to a depth of approximately 2.5 feet below the existing creek bed and extend approximately four feet into the creek channel.

Existing and proposed impervious surfaces within the work area are limited to the bridge and the aggregate base access roads. Existing and proposed impervious surfaces are approximately the same and are approximately 2,500 square feet. No trees or riparian vegetation are present within the bed and bank of the project area and no vegetation will be disturbed or removed.

Project Size

The total of ground disturbance associated with the project is estimated to be 0.28 acres and 150 linear feet. The proposed project size does not exceed what is allowed for coverage under the General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects and associated Categorical Exemption (15333) from the California Environmental Quality Act.

Project Associated Discharge

The discharge of material into waters of the state resulting from the project includes those associated with the concrete bridge abutments and the RSP.

Project Time Frame

Proposed project start date: August 15, 2016

Expected date of completion: October 1, 2016

Estimated work window: 45 days

Monitoring Plan

A project completion report will be prepared and submitted to the Regional Water Board and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife following conclusion of the work. The report will include details of the work completed and any changes to the project as proposed herein.

Annual site inspections will be conducted for a period of three years to monitor geomorphic conditions of the bed and bank of Bidwell Creek. Qualitative monitoring will be conducted to document the condition of the creek channel when the creek is dry during the summer months. The following conditions will be assessed and noted:

- Slope stability of creek banks
- Stability of creek channel, specifically changes to the bed of the creek in the location of the former plunge pool
- Indications of erosion or sediment discharge
- Establishment of vegetation

- Riparian conditions
- Condition of bridge and associated structures including footings and associated structural elements
- Assessment for additional actions, if needed

An annual report will be prepared and submitted to the Regional Water Board and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The report will include a written assessment of the site conditions and also include site photographs from established photo points of the project area to document changes over time.

Agency Permits

The applicant has also submitted applications for permitting and/or coverage of:

- a. Army Corp of Engineers Section 404 Permit – Nationwide Permit 14 (File No. 2016-00173)
- b. California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Section 1652 Habitat Restoration or Enhancement Permit

Notice of Applicability & Project Determination

Regional Water Board staff has determined that the proposed activities as described in the NOI are categorically exempt from CEQA review and may proceed under the General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects. The project shall be constructed and maintained as described in the NOI as well as any revised material reviewed and approved by the Executive Officer.

Receiving Water:	Bidwell Creek Middle Russian River Hydrologic Unit 114.25
Filled / Excavated Area:	0.07 acres of streambed/stream bank
Total Impacts:	Acreage Temporarily Impacted: 0.28 acres Length Temporarily Impacted: Approximately 150 feet
Dredge Volume:	None
Discharge Volume:	58 cubic yards of concrete 100 cubic yards of RSP
Latitude/Longitude:	38.6091° N, 122.6461° W

Reporting

As required in Section B, Item 4, of the *General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects*, Monitoring Reports be submitted at least annually documenting the achievement of performance standards and project goals. In addition, a Notice of Completion (NOC) shall be submitted by the applicant no later than 30 days after the project has been completed. A complete NOC includes at a minimum: photographs with a descriptive title, the date each photograph was taken, the name of the photographic site, the WDID number indicated above, and success criteria for the project. The NOC shall demonstrate that the project has been carried out in accordance with the project description as provided in the applicant's NOI. Please include the project name and WDID number with all future inquiries and document submittals. Document submittals shall be made electronically to: NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov

The State Water Resources Control Board General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects SB09016GN can be found here:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/generalorders/shrpcert032713.pdf

Please call Jake Shannon at (707) 576-2673 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Matthias St. John
Executive Officer

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cc: Tim Dodson, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
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