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## North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

June 29, 2016

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In the Matter of

**Water Quality Certification**

for

**Hauser Bridge Road Bridge Replacement Project**  
**WDID No. 1B15160WNSO**

APPLICANT: Sonoma County Transportation & Public Works Department,  
Chris Seppeler

RECEIVING WATER: Gualala River

HYDROLOGIC UNIT: Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit No. 113.85

COUNTY: Sonoma

FILE: Hauser Bridge Road Bridge Replacement Project, ECM PIN CW-  
820173

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### FINDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On December 14, 2015, the Sonoma County Transportation & Public Works Department (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 the Hauser Bridge Road Bridge Replacement Project (Project). Information describing the Project was noticed for public comment on the Regional Water Board's website on May 27, 2016. We received no comments. The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States and state associated with the South Fork of the Gualala River, an unnamed ephemeral tributary, and riparian area, within the Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit No. 113.85. The Project is located where Hauser Bridge Road crosses the South Fork of the Gualala River, Sonoma County, at latitude 38.603309°N, and longitude 123.286977°W. Temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State include approximately 240

linear feet of river and adjacent creek bed and bank and 0.03 acres of riparian vegetation clearing. Permanent impacts include clearing approximately 0.03 acres of riparian along approximately 40 linear feet river bank for the new approaches and abutments.

2. The primary purpose of the Project is to replace the Hauser Bridge Road Bridge adjacent to (northwest of) the existing structure. The existing three-span, 121 foot long by 12 foot wide, single lane, army deck truss main span bridge, constructed in 1947 has recently been determined to be structurally deficient.

The proposed Project would include installation of a new bridge which would span 165 feet and be 29 feet wide. Temporary access roads and structures will be placed along 150 linear feet of the river bank and bed in order to gain access, install abutments, and implement the project, then removed and restored to pre-Project condition. The new bridge will be located parallel to, and northwest of, the existing bridge and once the new bridge is completed the existing bridge will be removed by crane and approximately 40 linear feet of the channel banks where existing approaches and abutments are located, will be restored. Along an adjacent ephemeral tributary, a 90-foot long existing undersized culvert will be replaced when approach lanes are constructed.

3. The Project is planned to begin in the fall of 2016 through fall of 2017 with construction work planned to last approximately 168 days.
4. The proposed Project includes a plan to revegetate disturbed areas and restore the existing roadway approach and banks, including planting approximately 0.13 acres within the riparian area, restoring approximately 40 linear feet of river bank and revegetating 0.27 acres of adjacent uplands with appropriate native plant species. The Project proposes to employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction. 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.
5. The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 permit. The Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement.
6. On August 11, 2015, Sonoma County, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has produced an Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and filed with the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2015052058), pursuant to CEQA guidelines.
7. The Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit, Gualala River Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for sediment and was established 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 Gualala River are exceeded due to excessive sediment. 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, also listed as impaired in accordance with section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. The primary adverse impacts associated with excessive sediment and temperature in the Gualala River, pertain to cold freshwater habitat, primarily anadromous salmonid habitat. Activities authorized by this certification are designed to increase riparian vegetation and reduce sediment discharges. Authorized activities require implementation of BMPs for sediment and turbidity control, and implementation of impact avoidance measures as described above. Accordingly, this Order is consistent with, and implements portions of the Gualala River TMDL.

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 certification 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: Gualala River,  
Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit No. 113.85

Filled or Excavated Area: Permanent impact to waters of the US:

40 linear feet of river bank  
Permanent impact to waters of the state:  
0.03 acres of riparian  
Temporary impact to waters of the US:  
240 linear feet of river and creek channel  
Temporary impact to waters of the state:  
0.03 acres riparian

Latitude/Longitude: 38.603309°N / 123.286977°W

Expiration: June 29, 2021

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the Hauser Bridge Road Bridge Replacement Project (WDID No. 1B15160WNSO), 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 certification 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.

#### 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. 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. A fee of \$200 was received for the Project on December 14, 2015 and \$3,040 was received on June 23, 2016. This certification will be subject to annual billing during the construction phase ("Annual Active Discharge Fee") and during the monitoring phase of the Project ("Annual Post Discharge Monitoring Fee"), per the current fee

schedule, which can be found on our website:

[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/northcoast/water\\_issues/programs/water\\_quality\\_certification.shtml](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/water_quality_certification.shtml).

These fees will be automatically invoiced to the Applicant.

The Applicant must notify the Regional Water Board of the end of the construction phase of the Project in order to request the Regional Water Board to terminate annual construction period billing and to receive a "Notice of Completion of Discharges Letter". If the Project is subject to annual monitoring fees, the Applicant must also notify the Regional Water Board at the end of the monitoring period in order to request to terminate annual monitoring period billing and receive a "Notice of Project Complete Letter". Completion reports may be necessary to be submitted by Applicant at the end of each of these phases. Regional Water Board staff may request site visits at the end of each phase of the Project to confirm status of Project and compliance with this certification.

5. Compensatory mitigation shall be implemented in accordance the *Revegetation and Monitoring Plan Details* (Plan) revised May 26, 2016, submitted by the applicant. The Plan includes details to revegetate disturbed areas and restore the existing roadway approach and banks, including planting approximately 0.13 acres within the riparian area, restoring approximately 40 linear feet of river bank and revegetating 0.27 acres of adjacent uplands with appropriate native plant species. All plantings will have a minimum of 85% survival at the end of the five year monitoring period and shall be self-sustaining and free of irrigation for at least two years prior to meeting success criteria.

Results of annual monitoring of the mitigation areas shall be reported to the Regional Water Board annually by December 31. Reports shall summarize data collected, annual performance, any remedial action necessary and whether success criteria are met. The reports shall be submitted to the following email address:

[NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov).

6. The applicant shall remove any and all plastic netting material in the temporary impact area (possibly used for previous erosion control) that is currently discharging into the river degrading beneficial uses and a hazard to wildlife. To restore temporary access areas, erosion and sediment control shall satisfy condition #8 of this certification.
7. The Regional Water Board shall be notified at least five working days (working days are Monday – Friday) prior to the commencement of construction.
8. Only wildlife-friendly, 100 percent biodegradable erosion and sediment control products that will not entrap or harm wildlife shall be used. Erosion and sediment control products shall not contain synthetic (e.g., plastic or nylon) netting. Photodegradable synthetic products are not considered biodegradable. The Applicant shall request approval from the Regional Water Board if an exception from this requirement is needed for a specific location.

9. 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.
10. 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 certification, 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.
11. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the Project site to document compliance with this certification.
12. 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.
13. Prior to implementing any change to the Project that may be a material change as defined in California Water Code section 13260(c) as a proposed change in character, location, or volume of the discharge, the Applicant shall obtain prior written approval of the Regional Water Board Executive Officer. If the Regional Water Board is not notified of the material change to the discharge, it will be considered a violation of this certification, and the Applicant may be subject to Regional Water Board enforcement action(s).
14. All Project work shall be conducted as described in this certification 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 certification, and the Applicant may be subject to Regional Water Board enforcement actions.
15. The Applicant shall provide a copy of this certification 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.

16. Disturbance or removal of existing vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the Project.
17. 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.
18. The Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this certification, 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.
19. 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 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 certification. 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 certification 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 certification, the Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this certification as appropriate to ensure compliance.
20. 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 certification by letter and shall email a copy of the letter to the following email address: [NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov)

The successor-in-interest must email the Regional Water Board Executive Officer at: [NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov) a written request for the ownership change and the effective date of the change. The request must contain the following:

- i) Effective date of ownership change;
- ii) Requesting entity's full legal name;
- iii) The state of incorporation, if a corporation;
- iv) The address and phone number of contact person; and

- v) A description of any changes to the Project or confirmation that the successor-in-interest intends to implement the project as described in this certification.
21. 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).
22. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on June 29, 2021. 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 Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.

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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](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0017.pdf)

Original to: Ms. Cindy Rader, Sonoma County Transportation & Public Works, 2300 County Center Drive, Suite B100, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Electronic

Copy to: Holly Costa, US Army Corps of Engineers [holly.n.costa@usace.army.mil](mailto:holly.n.costa@usace.army.mil)

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