
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

September 19, 2016

Mr. Preston Harris
Siskiyou Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 268
Etna, CA 96027

Dear Mr. Harris:

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; Order No. SB12006GN

File: Mill Creek Streambank Stabilization Project
CW- 827886; WDID 1A161170WNTR

This letter is to certify coverage of Siskiyou Resource Conservation District's *Mill Creek Streambank Stabilization Project* (project) under the General 401 Water Quality Certification Order for Small Habitat Restoration Projects; Order No. SB12006GN (General 401 Order). The project will install large wood structures at six locations along a 150-foot section of the eroding left bank of Mill Creek.

Background

On August 8, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received a Notice of Intent (NOI) from the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District (applicant) to comply with the terms of, and obtain project coverage under, the General 401 Order for the project.

Project Location

The project is located on Mill Creek in Quartz Valley, Scott River Hydrologic Unit 105.42. The coordinates of the project are 41.58837° N, 122.960026° W.

Project Description

Flood events of the past decade have reduced in-stream habitat complexity in lower Mill Creek by altering streambed morphology and washing out woody debris. Recent high-flow events have also resulted in significant lateral bank erosion at the project site. The project will introduce large wood at six locations along a 150-foot section of eroding bank to re-direct hydraulic energy; arrest lateral bank migration; promote deposition of fine sediment between the barbs; and protect existing and promote future riparian vegetation

development. The large wood will also provide salmonids protection from predation by increasing the frequency, depth, and complexity of pool habitats.

The large wood structures will include four to eight pieces of wood each. Wood pieces will be approximately 25-35 feet long and 14-18 inches in diameter. Wood pieces with rootwads attached are preferable and will be selected as available. A portion of each individual log will be buried in the bank and cabled to large boulders. Spoils from partially burying the wood will be placed on top of the wood and the remainder will be placed along the bank to create a planting bench where locally sourced willow sprigs will be planted.

The applicant will minimize downstream turbidity and control flow through the site by diverting any flow past the work area through a temporary diversion channel constructed in the existing bar and cofferdams upstream and downstream of the work area. Dewatering the site is not anticipated but pumps may be used to draw down water within the isolated work area. Pump effluent will be discharged onto an upland pasture. Following implementation, a cattle exclusion fence will be constructed.

Heavy equipment access to the project site will be along existing dirt roads and through the landowner's pasture. Heavy equipment will not directly enter the wetted portion of the channel. Movement of dirt and placement of large wood will be completed by heavy equipment above the streambank. Heavy equipment to be used includes a medium-sized excavator, a loader, a dump truck, and a backhoe. All mechanized equipment fueling, servicing, and overnight parking will occur at least 200 feet from any wetted channel. All machinery will be thoroughly inspected and cleaned prior to use.

Project implementation will occur during the low flow period of September 1 - October 15 and in-stream work is expected to take 5 to 6 days.

Project Size

The total of ground disturbance associated with the project is estimated to be 0.5 acres and 150 linear feet. The size range of the logs to be installed is 14 to 18-inches in diameter and 25 to 35-feet in length. The proposed project size does not exceed what is allowed for coverage under the General 401 Order and associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) categorical exemption (15333).

Project Associated Discharge

The discharge of material into waters of the state resulting from the project includes those associated with the individual logs and less than 0.5 yards of incidental sediment discharge associated with bank disturbance.

Project Time Frame

Proposed project start date: September 15, 2016

Expected date of completion: October 15, 2016

Seasonal work window: September 15 – October 15

Note: This certification authorizes project related activities and discharges for up to five years. If the applicant is unable to complete the project in 2016, they shall notify the Regional Water Board in writing of the proposed implementation time frame prior to subsequent seasonal work windows.

Monitoring Plan

The purpose of the project is to improve the health and function of Mill Creek for aquatic organisms. The goals of the project are to increase in-stream habitat complexity for salmonids, reduce localized sediment inputs from eroding banks, and improve riparian vegetation condition. Measurable performance standards for these goals include arresting lateral bank migration in sensitive areas, increasing habitat for salmonids, and protecting

and promoting riparian vegetation. Photo monitoring, including the use of aerial photos, will be employed to monitor bank migration and riparian habitat development following project implementation. Periodic dives will also be used to monitor and record habitat utilization by salmonids at the project site.

Following the completion of each seasonal work period, and then on years one, three, and five following project completion, an annual report will be submitted to the Regional Water Board. This annual report will include the findings that result from pre- and post-project monitoring. These findings should indicate the achievement of performance standards that are relative to the project goals. Each report will include the following information:

- a. Summary of findings
- b. Identification and discussion of problems with achieving performance standards
- c. Proposed corrective measures as needed (requires Regional Water Board approval)
- d. Monitoring Data

Agency Permits

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

- a. Army Corp of Engineers Section 404 Permit – Nationwide Permit 27 – Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Establishment, and Enhancement Activities pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- b. California Department of Fish & Wildlife – Coho Help Act

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 Order.

Receiving Water: Mill Creek, Scott River Hydrologic Unit 105.42

Total Impacts: Acreage temporarily impacted: 0.5
Length temporarily impacted: 150 feet

Discharge Volume: Up to 48 logs

Latitude/Longitude: 41.58837° N, 122.960026° W

Reporting

As required in Section B, Item 4, of the General 401 Order, Monitoring Reports must 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 Order 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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