
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

November 1, 2016

California Department of Transportation
Attn: Mr. Frank Demling
1656 Union Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Frank.Demling@dot.ca.gov

Dear Mr. Demling:

Subject: Notice of Applicability for Coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board 401 Water Quality Certification of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2012 Nationwide Permits

File: State Route 1 Salmon Creek Geotechnical Investigation (Caltrans EA No. 01-40140), CIWQS PIN CW-829379, WDID No. 1B161556WNME

On October 21, 2016, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) staff received the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) notice of intent to comply with the terms of the General Water Quality certification of 2012 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permits (State Water Resources Control Board Order Number SB12002GN, hereinafter "General Order") for the Mendocino State Route 1 Salmon Creek Geotechnical Investigation (Project). Caltrans has filed for a non-reporting U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit number 6, *Survey Activities*. Project implementation would cause disturbances to the Navarro River hydrologic area (hydrologic subarea no. 113.50).

Caltrans is proposing a geotechnical investigative drilling operation in and adjacent to Big Salmon Creek at State Route 1 in order to obtain subsurface information that would inform design for replacement of the Salmon Creek Bridge. Drilling would be conducted at twelve (12) locations in the vicinity of the future bridge abutments and one (1) location within a jurisdictional wetland. The proposed soil borings would be approximately 4.5-inches in diameter and would be drilled to a depth ranging from 70 to 150 feet. A 5.5-inch diameter steel casing may be used at the top of the boring hole to secure drilling fluid circulation. The drilling fluids shall be contained and recirculated through a closed system—drilling fluids and products shall be fully recovered in a mud tank before being transferred to 55-gallon steel drums for disposal. The boreholes would be backfilled with cement slurry or a mixture of cement and bentonite slurry.

Plastic sheeting with a perimeter containment berm shall be used around drilling equipment, mud tubs, and borehole locations. In the event of a fluid spill, drilling will cease immediately to allow for containment and clean-up.

Temporary impacts to wetlands will be limited to vegetation trimming to allow for access and temporary installation of platforms for drill rig staging.

Caltrans, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, determined that the Project was categorically exempt from CEQA on March 20, 2014, pursuant to CEQA guidelines (section 15306, *Information Collection*). The State Water Resources Control Board has determined that projects with Nationwide Permit no. 6 and General Order coverage are exempt from CEQA, pursuant to CEQA guidelines (section 15304, *Minor Alterations to Land*).

Receiving Water: Big Salmon Creek-Frontal Pacific Ocean,
Hydrologic Unit 113.50

Total Temporary Impacts: 0.040 acres of wetlands

Discharge Volume: none

Latitude/Longitude: 39.2147° N, 123.768° W

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. Regional Water Board staff has determined that the proposed activities may proceed under the General 401 Order.

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 Brandon Stevens at (707) 576-2377 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Matthias St. John
Executive Officer

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cc: Kasey Sirkin, US Army Corps of Engineers, L.K.Sirkin@usace.army.mil
Hilary Sundeen, California Department of Transportation, hilary.sundeen@dot.ca.gov
Bill Orme, State Water Resources Control Board, Bill.Orme@waterboards.ca.gov