



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

February 2017

Executive Officer's 2016 Water Quality Stewardship Award Goes to the Mailliard Ranch, Russian River Watershed Cleanup Committee and the Clean River Alliance

Matt St. John

The Executive Officer's Water Quality Stewardship Award is an annual award given to an individual or group whose exceptional work contributes to the preservation and enhancement of surface water and groundwater quality in the North Coast Region. The Regional Water Quality Control Board and its staff spend much of its time and energy focused on the task of controlling waste discharges to the region's waters. This award is designed to acknowledge and honor our partners in water quality protection who augment the Regional Water Board's work with their own efforts in pollution prevention, waste minimization, water quality enhancement, and beneficial use restoration. There are so many deserving recipients, I couldn't pick just one for 2016! The Executive Officer's 2016 Water Quality Stewardship Award goes to three deserving recipients: the Mailliard Ranch, the Russian River Watershed Cleanup Committee and the Clean Water Alliance.

Larry Mailliard and the Mailliard Ranch oversee approximately 15,000 acres of timberland between the Garcia River and Navarro River watersheds. The Mailliard family originally purchased the first parcel back in 1925. In the 1940s, at the same time that the Post-World War II logging era was just beginning, the Mailliard family donated a large

portion of their old-growth redwood forest to the Save the Redwoods League, becoming part of the California State Parks system and known as the Mailliard Redwoods State Natural Reserve. Larry Mailliard, who grew up on the property, is now the resident caretaker of the land, and has been maintaining the same land stewardship ethic of his relatives. The Mailliard Ranch was the very first property to work directly with the North Coast Water Board into conformance with the TMDL Action Plan for the Garcia River Watershed. The Mailliard Ranch has been practicing sustainable timber harvesting with the assistance from registered professional forester Todd McMahon. The Mailliard Ranch is currently finalizing a second conservation easement with Save the Redwoods League, to permanently protect the remaining stands of old-growth redwood. The Mailliard Ranch currently owns the third largest remaining old-growth redwoods in private ownership behind the Mendocino Redwood Company and Humboldt Redwood Company. We are grateful for the Mailliard family's land conservation and stewardship ethics exhibited on their land.

The Russian River Watershed is the most urbanized watershed in the North Coast Region, and while it is considerably cleaner than many other urban rivers in California, it is vulnerable to degradation by trash and debris. Thankfully, the efforts of countless volunteers, sponsors, and the organization and leadership of the **Russian River Watershed Cleanup Committee** has substantially reduced the amount of trash in and along the banks of the Russian River. Started in 1987 the mission of the Russian River

Watershed Cleanup is to coordinate cleanup and removal of trash in the Russian River and its tributaries between Ukiah and Jenner. They organize and coordinate teams of volunteers for an annual cleanup and promote stewardship of the Russian River watershed. In 2016 the **Russian River Riverkeeper** took over management of the cleanup efforts. For the September 2016 cleanup there were 364 total registered volunteers and they removed 21,769 pounds of trash from over 89 miles of stream banks in the watershed with 4,405 pounds diverted to recycling or reuse! To sign up for the September 16, 2017 cleanup event, go to: <http://russianrivercleanup.org/>.

Also, the **Clean River Alliance** (<http://cleanriveralliance.org>) sponsors monthly trash cleanup events in the watershed. Founded in late 2014 specifically to address the problem of accumulation of trash in and along the banks of the Russian River, the Clean Water Alliance has engaged hundreds of volunteers and organized dozens of cleanup events. Further, the Clean Water Alliance has recruited assistance from homeless people living near the river to participate in cleanup efforts and reduce the amount of trash and waste left near the river. Since January 2016 volunteers associated with the Clean River Alliance, and working with the Vet Connect Clean Day Project, has collected over 32,000 pounds of trash in the lower Russian River area. This type of leadership and partnership with the people who call the Russian River watershed their home is outstanding.

The Regional Water Boards thanks the Russian River Watershed Cleanup Committee and the Clean Water Alliance for their efforts to cleanup and keep the Russian River clean!

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Beneficial Reuse of Dredged Material in North Coast Region

Gil Falcone

Dredged material from harbors and marinas may contain elevated concentrations of pollutants, including, but not limited to, heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), pesticides, and dioxin that could impact beneficial uses of waters of the state depending on characteristics of the dredged material and nature and location of where it is placed. For this reason, dredged material has typically been considered and treated as a waste material. Typically, dredged material has been permanently disposed of as a waste at designated sites, including federally approved offshore sites such as the Humboldt Open Ocean Disposal Site (HOODS), or at permitted landfill sites approved to accept such material. However, certain designated wastes can be a valuable local resource when beneficially reused, if chemical constituent levels and physical properties allow for reuse and an approved benefit can be shown. Beneficial reuse needs to meet specific criteria to be in compliance with solid waste regulation, the Clean Water Act, Porter-Cologne and other statutes and regulations.

Regional Water Board staff review and to approve the dredging, dewatering and disposal of dredged material along our coastline in Bodega Bay, Noyo Harbor, Humboldt Bay, Crescent City Harbor and other areas. In recent years with the closure of local landfills and cost and restrictions of offshore disposal sites, dredged material has filled temporary storage areas near harbors. With an interest by municipalities to continue dredging navigational channels but a lack of disposal options or acceptable land application projects, Regional Water Board staff has worked with municipalities to find pathways for beneficial reuse projects that would alleviate the accumulation of dredged material and also be protective of water quality. For example, in 2015 at Noyo Harbor in Fort Bragg, Regional

Water Board staff have approved placement of suitable dredged material at specific receiving sites for beneficial reuse that would not exceed regulatory thresholds or impair the beneficial uses of state waters.



Dredging Noyo Harbor. Photo by Erik Nielson, SHN Engineers & Geologists.

The second example is in 2015, staff received an application for Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification for the White Slough Restoration Project within the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which proposed beneficial reuse of dredged sediment as one possible source of fill material to meet project needs of over 200,000 cubic yards of fill material to restore salt marsh in subsided tidelands. Concurrently, staff received a request from project proponents of a pilot-scale project involving dredging at King Salmon in Humboldt Bay. Building on our experience with Noyo Harbor projects, a growing interest in the beneficial reuse of dredged material in Humboldt Bay, and the recent 401 water quality certification application for salt marsh restoration in Humboldt Bay, Regional Water Board staff is in the process of developing guidance for the review and approval of beneficial reuse proposals throughout the region.

The draft guidance is being prepared by staff from the 401 water quality certification, cleanup, and compliance assurance units. The draft guidance is being developed in preparation of the White Slough Restoration Project 401

certification to be protective of water quality and fulfill water quality control regulatory requirements and may also be utilized in future maintenance dredging projects should they qualify for beneficial reuse.

The draft guidance proposes clear pathways including decision points and regulatory thresholds toward obtaining approval for placement of dredged material at approved uplands as well as sites adjacent to and within waters of the state. It also suggests pathways based on source material, receiving site, waters of the state type, sensitive ecological receptors at the receiving site, Basin Plan numeric Water Quality Objectives (WQOs) and other thresholds related to ecology, human health, and public safety. The draft guidance identifies pathways for staff making consistent suitability determinations for dredged material and fill material to be placed for beneficial reuse in waters, and for temporary or permanent placement in uplands. It also helps applicants to understand the approval process and estimate costs of sampling and analysis associated with each pathway.



Water placement of dredge material. Photo by Erik Nielson, SHN Engineers & Geologists

For projects where permanent placement of dredged material is proposed within waters of the state, concentrations of chemical constituents should not exceed those of the receiving site, should meet numeric WQOs for the appropriate surface waters and not pose toxicity to any sensitive ecological receptors.

This draft guidance, though similar to the beneficial reuse guidelines developed at the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board, include, more robust sampling (Incremental Sampling Methodology – ISM) for the dredged material and the receiving site in order to reduce sampling variability. It uses ambient receiving site condition data and numeric WQOs as approval thresholds rather than San Francisco Bay ambient Regional Screening Levels.

For projects where dredged material is proposed for placement in uplands, there is the possibility that the spoils will dewater and leach into groundwater. In these instances, pathway C of the Reuse Guidance requires sampling and analysis of both the dredged material and the receiving site soils to ensure that leachate does not contribute to an exceedance of groundwater WQOs. The Reuse Guidance also includes groundwater testing requirements for maintaining the beneficial use of MUN (Municipal Drinking Water) where present, and designated within the Basin Plan.



Upland dredge piles. Photo by Erik Nielson, SHN Engineers & Geologists.

Additional requirements are outlined for assessing dredged material potential impact on sensitive ecological receptors and human health screening levels. Dredged material can contain pollutants above numeric WQOs for MUN-designated waters and therefore make this pathway challenging to meet.

Additional challenges exist in terms of complying with SWRCB Policy 88-63 (Sources of Drinking Water) which requires all surface and groundwaters in the region to have an MUN designation, with the exception specified in Policy 88-63. However, not all groundwater, particularly along bay margins, meet the definition of SWRCB Policy 88-63. Therefore, it is necessary to identify locations that do not meet SWRCB Policy 88-63 requirements. These upland locations would likely be suitable for accepting dredged materials for dewatering and various beneficial reuses.

Approving pilot-scale beneficial reuse of dredged material projects has allowed staff to work with a few applicants, while testing the draft guidance and refining the process to allow characterized material meeting water quality thresholds to be beneficially reused. Approved projects could benefit ecological restoration, support strategies for addressing sea level rise, reduce transportation expenses and greenhouse gas emission by using material locally, as well as, reducing waste disposal at offshore and landfill sites. Moving forward Regional Water Board staff intends to continue to partner with North Coast municipalities and agencies to refine this beneficial reuse process and draft guidance where appropriate, while maintaining our high quality surface and ground waters.

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## Russian River Watershed Association Environmental Column - January 2017 **It's Time to Plant a Rain Garden**

*This article was authored by Eric Janzen, City of Cloverdale on behalf of RRWA.*

Historically, homes and streets were intentionally designed to move as much stormwater into a storm drain system as fast as possible. This approach was meant to protect foundations and keep the streets safer during

storms. However, as our cities and towns have grown larger, this “old school” method has had some unintended consequences, resulting in damage to our creeks, waterways, the Russian River, and hazards to our communities.

The old school method causes the water to move very quickly and in great amounts. Fast-moving water can sometimes overwhelm the storm drains and creeks and cause local flooding. In large storms, it makes the Russian River rise faster and higher which can cause widespread flooding. Additionally, water in our storm drains flows straight into our creeks and river without ever being treated. Consequently, stormwater pollution gathered from driveways, walkways, rooftops can damage the salmon and steelhead fisheries that are dependent on clean water.

Fortunately, there are many options for reducing the negative effects our homes have on our river.

Rain gardens are one of the easiest methods and they are being used more and more by landscape architects and gardeners. A rain garden captures the water flowing off our homes and driveways and allows it to soak into the ground instead of letting it flow to a storm drain and directly to our river. Rain gardens are part of a “new school” method for managing stormwater called “low impact development” or LID. Rain gardens, like many other LID features, gather, hold, filter, and slow stormwater runoff.

Rain gardens are located in a place in your yard where they can gather rainwater from your roof, patio and/or driveway. They are dug extra deep and often have gravel at the bottom. Soil is placed on top of the gravel and then landscaped with plants that can tolerate saturated soils and even short periods of standing water while keeping the soil in place. Then, the rain water captured at the bottom of the rain garden can soak into the ground after the storm has passed. This helps filter out some pollutants and slows the flow of stormwater to our river.

Another easy LID feature that a homeowner can implement is to disconnect the rooftop downspouts that drain directly onto hardscape, like your driveway or patio, and reroute the drainage to any vegetated area. Some runoff will infiltrate into the ground and be taken up by vegetation in your yard. Some of the water will be filtered and discharged more slowly into the storm drain system. If you send this water to a rain garden, you can avoid adverse effects to your foundation or protect steep hillside slopes by locating the rain garden away from these features.

Pervious or porous pavers for walkways, patios, parking areas and driveways are also an LID design option. Pervious pavers allow stormwater to infiltrate into the soil through gaps intentionally left between paver bricks or stones. Porous pavers allow for stormwater to infiltrate into the soil through holes or perforations in the pavers.

When we “slow the flow” of stormwater, we protect stream banks from being eroded by an excessive volume of fast moving water. When we allow soils and plants to filter stormwater, we reduce the amount of sediment and pollutants entering waterways. When we infiltrate more of our stormwater, we help replenish groundwater and allow a more natural water cycle to occur.

By building rain gardens, routing downspouts to landscapes, installing permeable pavers and other LID features, we help protect ourselves and the environment, especially our creeks and the Russian River.

Another excellent source of information for homeowners about LID is the guide “Slow it. Spread it. Sink it. Store it!” which was developed by the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Program. To download a free copy of the guide, go to <http://sonomarcd.org/htm/rainwater.htm>.

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## Enforcement Report for February 2017 Executive Officer's Report

*Diana Henrioule*

| Date Issued | Discharger                  | Action Type | Violation Type         | Status as of January 6, 2017 |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 11/14/16    | Keysight Technologies, Inc. | NOV         | Unauthorized Discharge | Resolved                     |

**Comments:** On November 14, 2016, the Planning, Stewardship, and Compliance Assurance Division Chief issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) to Keysight Technologies, Inc. for an unauthorized discharge of reclaimed wastewater into Paulin Creek, Santa Rosa, CA. On August 8, 2016, a leak from an irrigation water supply line discharged approximately 4,500 gallons of treated reclaimed industrial wastewater to a storm drain outlet which flowed to Paulin Creek. The discharger reported that within 25 minutes the leak was discovered and the irrigation supply was shut down. The NOV serves as notice only, requiring no further action at this time.

| Date Issued | Discharger      | Action Type | Violation Type              | Status as of January 6, 2017 |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12/01/16    | Steve Strombeck | NOV         | Clean Water Act Section 401 | Ongoing                      |

**Comments:** On December 1, 2016, the Nonpoint Source and Surface Water Protection Division Chief issued a NOV to Steve Strombeck for failure to provide mitigation monitoring reports and other pertinent information required by Clean Water Act Section 401 for the Campbell Creek Apartments in Arcata. The NOV requires the Discharger to provide required reports and information by December 15, 2016. The discharger replied to the NOV, with staff determining that further follow-up is required. This matter is ongoing.

| Date Issued | Discharger              | Action Type | Violation Type | Status as of January 6, 2017 |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 12/14/16    | City of Fort Bragg WWTF | ACLO        | MMPs           | Ongoing                      |

**Comments:** On December 14, 2016, the Executive Officer (EO) issued Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R1-2016-0049 to Fort Bragg Municipal Improvement District No. 1, City of Fort Bragg WWTF for Mandatory Minimum Penalties (MMPs) in the amount \$39,000. The Stipulated Order indicates that the Discharger will apply the penalty amount to a Compliance Project (CP), consisting of two separate sub-projects, CP1 and CP2. CP1 involves the installation of an influent flow meter that will allow Facility operators to adjust treatment based on measured influent flows and pollutant loadings, thus reducing the likelihood of TSS and BOD effluent limit exceedances. CP2 involves the installation of disinfection analyzers that will allow Facility operators to automatically measure chlorine and bi-sulfite levels prior to discharge and will alert operators of any malfunctions, thus reducing the likelihood of total chlorine residual and total coliform effluent limit exceedances. Both projects are to be completed by October 10, 2017.

| Date Issued | Discharger        | Action Type | Violation Type                                       | Status as of January 6, 2017 |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12/23/16    | Thompson Cleaners | CAO         | Unauthorized discharge of PCE to waters of the state | Ongoing                      |

**Comments:** On December 23, 2016, the EO issued Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) No. R1-2016-0054 to Wallace Family Living Trust, Carolyne J. Wallace, Trustee, Thompson Cleaners, for unauthorized discharge of PCE to waters of the state. The CAO directs the Discharger to submit workplans and reports to address indoor air, soil and vapor, and groundwater at and around the site location, and to perform cleanup and abatement actions with various due dates. This matter is ongoing.

