

September 14, 2010

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

California Department of Transportation
Highway 1 – Timber Gulch Culvert Project
WDID No. 1B10072WNSO

Sonoma County

On June 15, 2010 the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application and \$860 fee from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), requesting Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to the proposed Highway 1 – Timber Gulch Culvert Project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States (U.S.) and waters of the State associated with Timber Gulch Creek a coastal tributary located within the Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit (HU) No.113.00 (Russian Gulch Hydrologic Area 113.90).

The proposed project is located on Highway 1 at post mile (PM) 29.9, in Sonoma County. The purpose of the proposed project is to replace the existing culvert that was damaged in the 2005/2006 wet season and has significantly degraded due to scour. Caltrans proposes replacing the current 48-inch diameter corrugated metal pipe culvert with a 108-inch diameter steel pipe culvert. Additionally, Caltrans proposed to install new headwalls, wingwalls, and rock slope protection (RSP) with the new culvert. The newly proposed structure is designed to pass larger debris flows and prevent additional erosion and scour.

The proposed project will result in temporary and permanent impacts to waters of the U.S and waters of the State. The scope of work proposed may require the installation of a water diversion and may require dewatering activities. Construction will also include vegetation clearing, excavation, concrete work and the construction of temporary access road.

Caltrans has determined that temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. would total 312 ft² (154 linear feet) and permanent impacts would total 1,261 ft² (216 linear feet). Caltrans will utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs) to provide erosion control and pollution prevention throughout the project area during construction and demolition. In addition, all graded areas within the project affected by the construction activities will be appropriately stabilized and/or replanted with appropriate native vegetation. In addition, construction and post construction BMPs will be implemented to ensure erosion is minimized and controlled.

Caltrans proposes to mitigate the project impacts by purchasing credits to the California State Parks Willow Creek Watershed Restoration Program and conducting on-site revegetation. The off-site mitigation at Willow Creek (tributary to the Russian River) will consist of funding the restoration of 0.09 acres (3,920 ft²) of waters of the State within the watershed.

Caltrans has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under their Nationwide Permits No. 14 (linear transportation projects) pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. Caltrans has also applied for a California Department of Fish and Game Streambed Alteration and a Coastal Development Permit. Caltrans has determined that this project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (Class 2 Categorical Exemption). In addition, Regional Water Board staff also determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review and anticipate filing a Notice of Exemption.

The majority of proposed project activity is scheduled to begin in August 2011 through October 15, 2011. The entire project is expected to take approximately 30 working days to complete; however, the proposed in-channel work will only be conducted between dry season, when flows are low.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Jeremiah Puget at (707) 576-2835 or jpuget@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed road construction activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed project including maps and design drawings. The related documents and comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.