July 19, 2011

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

Asti Cellar #8
Bank Stabilization and Fish Habitat Enhancement Project
WDID No. 1B1103WNSO

Sonoma County

On July 01, 2011, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Evan Engber of BioEngineering Associates on behalf of Treasury Wine Estates Americas Company dba Asti Winery (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, water quality certification (Certification) for proposed activities associated with the Asti Cellar #8 Bank Stabilization and Fish Habitat Enhancement Project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to approximately 0.176 acres, 385 linear feet, of waters of the United States and waters of the State associated with the Russian River within the Geyserville Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.25, Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The proposed project site is located on the right (west) bank of the Russian River, upstream and downstream of Villa Pompeii at Asti, in Sonoma County, California (APN 118-020-007), latitude 38.767808°N, longitude 122.977484°W.

The primary purpose of the proposed project is to stabilize 385 feet of severely-eroding riverbank, revegetate the riparian edge and enhance/create fish habitat.

The proposed project employs the use of bioengineering techniques to stabilize the bank. The proposed project consists of the construction of a combination of deflection and absorption structures at three sites on the right (west) bank of the Russian River as described below.

Site #1 begins 70-feet (ft) up a small unnamed tributary, near the location of a water supply well for the vineyard and a portion of the Asti community. A 20-ft wide vegetated roughened channel is proposed to stop channel down cutting and help prevent the water supply well from being outflanked and damaged by high flows. Restoration at Site #1 continues for an additional 200-ft downstream with the construction of 7 Rock and Willow Brushlayer Lifts, constructed following the existing slope to meet at the toe with a Vegetated Boulder Wing Deflector 6-ft high jutting 20-ft out into the river and 15-ft long overall. The deflector will be interplanted with willow and/or shade tolerant native species. Continuing downstream; a Live Willow Brush Mattress will be installed extending 75-ft at a 1:2 slope along the upper half of the bank; the lower half will be Rock-and-Live-Willow Brushlayer Lifts at a 1:1 slope. Two sections of the western bank, which are currently armored with no vegetation, will be reorganized and planted with live willow stakes.

Site #2, is approximately 2,500-ft downstream of Site #1 and includes a series of 9 large Vegetated Boulder Wing Deflectors that are proposed to be installed over a total bank

length of 484-ft. The width of each will be 20-ft along bank and 30-ft into channel from bank top. The purpose of the Vegetated Boulder Wing Deflectors is to slow flow velocities and minimize erosive forces.

The amount of rock used for the Vegetated Boulder Wing Deflectors will be minimized by integrating long live willow branches between the rock layers. These live branches will project out a minimum of 3 feet from each layer and completely surround the structure between each lift of rock. Approximately 1,500 live will branches will be used per structure which will continue to grow and increase the ability to absorb rather than pass on the energy of flood flows. The open spaces between the rocks will be filled with river bar gravel to provide a growing medium for the live willow branches. The gravel will be harvested from the west bank that is just upstream from the summer crossing roadway located on the vineyard property. The amount of gravel needed is estimated to be less than 400 cubic yards.

The series of alcoves that will be created between the structures will be filled with trees that have been downed by the local bank erosion. Most of the trees will be installed with root wads intact, and will utilize the many fallen trees that are at the site. The trunk end of the trees will be buried underneath the rock and willow structures with the rootball extending into the wetted alcove. The alcoves will provide high flow refugia, shade, resting and feeding areas for fish, as well as protecting the bank from further erosion.

The top of bank will be sloped back up to six feet from the existing edge. All disturbed or constructed areas of the bank that result in bare soil, will be mulched and seeded with a native grass and wildflower mixture, and planted with native trees and shrubs. Existing mature trees will be protected in place, younger/smaller willow and cottonwood will either be transplanted further back from the edge or integrated as live material into the bank restoration design.

Site # 3, is approximately 1,000-ft downstream of Site #2 and consists of a 20-ft wide rock, gravel and live willow platform that is proposed for 160-ft downstream from the existing Boulder Wing Deflector along the toe of the eroding riverbank to the end of the erosion. This will be the foundation for a 160-foot length of Rock-and-Live Willow Lifts beginning at summer water level and extending vertically 10-ft at a 1:1 slope. Above this level, building up to the top of the bank will transition to Coir (coconut fiber) Wrapped Gravel and Willow Lifts 20-ft wide at the base tapering up to 10-ft wide at the top. Large wood in the form of local downed trees will be installed while building the rock platform to add a significant fish habitat component.

Further mitigation measures will include removal of Arundo donax and Armenian blackberry from the project area. Work within the wetted channel will be isolated from the river by use of a continuous silt curtain that floats from the surface and hangs down into the water, weighted with a chain sewn into the bottom of the curtain. Appropriate monitoring and contingency plans will be required. The structures and plantings will be

monitored for at least five years; the plantings will have at least an 85% survival rate and the structure will be monitored for designed purpose; annual reports will be submitted to the Regional Water Board. Appropriate construction stormwater best management practices will be employed to prevent erosion and delivery of sediment from the site while it is being constructed and after it is finished. Work is proposed for the low flow season, between June 15 and October 15, and is expected to take approximately five weeks.

The project will reduce sediment delivery and increase shade and habitat, and reduce temperature; thus, no compensatory mitigation is required.

The applicant has applied for authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The applicant has also applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game. The Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, as lead agency for CEQA, is preparing a Negative Declaration for this project and will submit it to the State Clearinghouse in order to comply with CEQA. The Regional Water Board will consider the draft environmental document and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.

The Russian River is identified as impaired on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list. The Russian River is listed as impaired for sediment and temperature. At present, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) have not been established for this water body. If TMDLs are established and implementation plans are adopted for this watershed prior to the expiration date of the requested Certification, the Regional Water Board may revise the provisions of that Certification to address actions identified in such action plans. Bank erosion is identified as a source contributing to the sediment impairment. Removal of riparian vegetation is identified as contributing to temperature impairment. Activities that will be authorized by the pending certification are designed to increase riparian vegetation and reduce sediment discharges from bank erosion. Actions authorized by this Order require implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and turbidity control and planting of more riparian zone shade vegetation at and near the project site. Accordingly, this Order is consistent with, and implements BMPs that would attenuate sediment and temperature adverse impacts.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed activities including maps and detailed design drawings. The application and Regional Water Board file are available for public review.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and

received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.