

May 6, 2013

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

California Department of Transportation
State Route 199 STAA Improvement Project at Patrick Creek Narrows
WDID No. 1A13042WNDN

Del Norte County

On April 15, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requesting Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to the proposed State Route 199 (SR 199) STAA Access Project (project). The proposed project would cause disturbances to waters of the United States (U.S.) associated with the Middle Fork Smith River Hydrologic Unit (Hydrologic Unit 103.3).

The purpose of the project is to improve safety conditions along an approximately 5-mile stretch of SR 199 in Del Norte County. Safety would be improved by providing wider lanes, greater sight distance, and gentler curves. Related work that could impact water quality includes replacing culverts and existing concrete arch bridge, rock blasting, constructing retaining walls, reconstructing drainage ditches, asphalt-concrete grinding, and roadway widening. All three project locations are adjacent the Smith River Middle Fork.

Caltrans has determined that the proposed project would result in approximately 0.01 acres of permanent and approximately 0.02 acres of temporary impacts to jurisdictional waters. Caltrans has also determined that the proposed project would result in approximately 0.15 acres of permanent and approximately 0.02 acres of temporary impacts to riparian areas. As mitigation, Caltrans is proposing to restore temporarily impacted areas to pre-construction condition following completion of construction activities and remove invasive species in the upper reaches of the forest watershed.

The proposed project would be constructed between October 15, 2013, and October 15, 2017. The project would result in more than one acre of disturbed soil area. Caltrans would prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan detailing best management practices to control pollution from the project area during construction. All disturbed areas within the project would be appropriately stabilized and/or replanted with appropriate native vegetation.

To ensure compliance with Basin Plan water quality objectives, requirements to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts associated with the proposed project would be incorporated as enforceable conditions in the Water Quality Certification.

Caltrans will apply to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit No. 14 (*Linear Transportation Projects*), pursuant to CWA, section 404. Caltrans has also applied for a California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1602 streambed alteration agreement. Caltrans has requested a biological assessment and

opinion from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service regarding potential impacts to threatened and endangered species within the project site.

On April 10, 2013, Caltrans, acting as lead agency, certified a Final Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project in order to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (State Clearing House No. 2008082128). The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental documentation, including any proposed changes, and would incorporate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures into the project as a condition of certification to avoid significant effects to the environment.

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 Brendan Thompson at (707) 576-2699 or via e-mail, at Brendan.Thompson@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of Caltrans's proposed road construction activities. The Regional Water Board's project file includes the application for Water Quality Certification and additional details about the proposed project, including maps and design drawings. Project documents and any 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.