

January 10, 2014

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

California Department of Transportation  
State Route 299 Little Grass Valley Fish Passage Project  
WDID No. 1A13134WNTR

Trinity County

On October 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 (certification) for activities related to the proposed State Route 299 Little Grass Valley Creek Fish Passage Project (Project). The proposed Project will disturb jurisdictional wetlands and waters within the Trinity Hydrologic Unit (USGS Cataloging Unit 18010211).

The proposed Project is located on State Route (SR) 299, at post-miles 68.0 and 68.2, in Trinity County. The purpose of the Project is to provide fish passage improvements at two culverts within Little Grass Valley Creek. Project elements include:

- Installation of twenty-one in-line concrete ramp weirs within two separate 12-foot-diameter steel-pipe culverts;
- Installation of two vortex boulder weirs downstream of each culvert. The boulder weirs will form a step-pool configuration and ease upstream fish passage; and
- Removal of 350 cubic yards of stream bed and bank materials to allow for weir installation.

The Project is within Little Grass Valley Creek, which is tributary to the Trinity River. Caltrans has determined that the proposed Project would result in approximately 0.062 acres (180 linear feet) and 0.0025 acres of permanent impacts to jurisdictional creek and wetlands, respectively, as well as, 0.051, 0.058, and 0.0013 acres of temporary jurisdictional impacts to riparian, creek, and wetland areas, respectively. To compensate for temporarily-impacted creek and riparian areas, Caltrans is proposing a combination of stream bank and riparian area plantings consisting of white alder and Oregon ash.

Construction would be limited to the dry season, between June 15 and October 15, in 2014 or 2015. Caltrans would utilize appropriate Best Management Practices to control pollutants during construction.

Caltrans has received a Nationwide Permit (No. 27, *Wetland and Riparian Restoration and Creation Activities*), from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. Caltrans also received a letter from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), on March 22, 2013, concurring with Caltrans's Biological Assessment that project implementation may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect Southern

Oregon/Northern California Coast coho salmon or their designated critical habitat. NMFS also determined that the project's proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures would offset the adverse effects to essential fish habitat for Pacific Coast salmon.

On May 23, 2013, the California Department of Transportation, acting as lead agency, filed a Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), declaring that the project was exempt from CEQA.

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 [Brendan.Thompson@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto: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 activities. The Regional Water Board's Project file includes the application for certification and additional details of 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.