

January 13, 2014

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

California Department of Transportation
State Route 299 Acorn Curve Improvement Project
WDID No. 1B13145WNHU

Humboldt County

On November 26, 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 Acorn Curve Improvement Project (Project). The proposed Project would disturb un-named, intermittent tributaries to Redwood Creek within the Beaver Hydrologic Area of the Redwood Creek Hydrologic Unit (Basin Plan Hydrologic Planning Area 1107.2).

The proposed Project is located on State Route (SR) 299, at post-miles 19.3 and 19.8, in Humboldt County. The purpose of the Project is to improve roadway safety by widening paved shoulders, improving the superelevation, closing a 1000-foot gap between two existing westbound truck climbing lane segments, and installing centerline and shoulder rumble strips. Other project elements include:

- Excavation to install a geo-synthetic reinforced embankment. The embankment would be built in layers by placing geo-fabric and back-filling and compacting earth material;
- Two culverts at post-miles 19.48 and 19.72 would be replaced with the same length and diameter corrugated steel pipes; and
- Replacement of the existing concrete drainage inlet at post-mile 19.48 and placement of rock slope protection at the outlets of both drainage outlets.

There are two un-named, intermittent watercourses draining through culverts within the project limits—both are tributary to Lacks Creek. Caltrans has determined that the proposed Project would result in approximately 177 square feet (0.004 acres) of permanent impacts to jurisdictional waters. To compensate for permanent impacts to jurisdictional waters, Caltrans is proposing to use 0.0056 acres in surplus State waters restoration credit at the Lacks Creek mitigation site on Bureau of Land Management property, approximately 10 miles southeast of the town of Orick. The Lacks Creek mitigation project is being implemented as mitigation for the State Route 299 Green Point Sink Project, which Caltrans received 401 water quality certification from the Regional Water Board on June 20, 2012.

Project implementation would result in an additional 0.73 acres of new impervious surface. Caltrans is proposing to install a traction sand trap to treat approximately 0.88 acres of stormwater runoff from impervious roadways surfaces. Because traction sand traps do not treat smaller particles and soluble pollutants, the Regional Water Board would require additional treatment within the project watershed as a condition of certification.

Construction would be limited to the dry season, between May 15, and October 15, 2014. Caltrans would develop a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and utilize appropriate best management practices to control pollutants during construction.

Caltrans is reporting coverage under a United States Army Corps of Engineers non-reporting Nationwide Permit No. 14, *Maintenance*, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. Caltrans has also submitted a Notification of Streambed Alteration to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

On October 22, 2013, the California Department of Transportation, acting as lead agency, signed a Notice of Determination that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment with incorporation of avoidance and mitigation measures, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (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 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.