

January 22, 2014

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

Mendocino County Department of Transportation  
Fish Rock Road Sediment Reduction Project  
WDID No. 1B13089WNME

Mendocino County

On July 15, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Mendocino County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with sediment reduction activities associated with the county-owned and maintained Fish Rock Road. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with tributaries to the Garcia River watershed (Hydrologic Unit No. 113.70), including: Mill Creek, Cabin Creek, Pardaloe Creek, unnamed tributaries to Mill Creek, unnamed tributaries to Pardaloe Creek, unnamed tributaries to Garcia River, unnamed tributaries to Inman Creek, unnamed tributaries to Signal Creek, unnamed tributaries to Hayfield Creek, unnamed tributaries to Fleming Creek. Additionally, due to ridge top location of some treatments, the following tributaries to the Gualala River watershed (Hydrologic Unit No. 113.81) may also be considered receiving waters: unnamed tributaries to Billings Creek, unnamed tributaries to Hayfield Creek, unnamed tributaries to Doty Creek, and unnamed tributaries to the Little North Fork Gualala River.

The Project is located along 14 miles of Fish Rock Road, with the following bounding coordinates: west bounding coordinates Latitude 38.83367 N Longitude 123.56451 W and east bounding coordinates Latitude 38.91502 N, Longitude 123.29786 W. Temporary impact to bed and bank of unnamed tributaries to the Garcia River and Gualala River is 0.33 acres/2,333 linear feet. Permanent impacts include 386 cubic yards of rock armoring as energy dissipaters in scoured out areas and 70 cubic yards of excavation/backfill rock slope protection as grade control.

The primary purpose and final goal of the project is to implement the Mendocino County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT) Erosion control plan (ECP) and Site Specific Management Plan (SSMP) for compliance with the Action Plan for the Garcia River Watershed Sediment Total Maximum Daily Load. Preliminary estimates of decadal sediment savings as a result of proposed activities is estimated to be about 29,300 cubic yards of sediment based on the MCDOT's Direct Inventory to Road Treatments (DIRT) database estimates. Funding for this project has been provided in part through an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program (Clean Water Act Section 319).

The project will reduce chronic and episodic sediment delivery to the Garcia River and Gualala River watersheds. Sediment reduction treatments focus on; replacement of undersized and corroded culverts on filled stream crossings and installation of more frequent ditch relief culverts to better restore the natural hydrology, culvert downspouts to discharge at more stable locations, energy dissipaters at culvert outlets, outside berm removal activities and installation of over-side drains for improved road drainage, reshaping of dirt roads for improved drainage, rock surfacing, and removal of outside fill materials in some areas to reduce effective slope angle and soil weight for improved slope stability.

Road upgrades - including outsloping, removal of outside berms, installation of rolling dips, filling of inboard ditches, rock surfacing, upsizing of existing ditch relief culverts, and installation of overside drains - will be implemented at various locations along Fish Rock Road by the County Roads Division. Additionally, 39 individual project sites are proposed for upgrade as part of this request for certification, including: one new ditch relief culvert, rock slope protection for four existing ditch relief culverts, one gully repair, one new ditch relief culvert associated with a spring, installation of six new culverts on filled stream crossings, upsize and replace twenty existing stream crossing culverts, and upgrade two partial fish barriers through the installation of two precast bottomless arches.

The project is self-mitigating; it is designed to reduce delivery of sediment and will improve water quality conditions. The project will employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction. BMPs included within project designs utilize the following sources of guidance:

- *A Water Quality and Stream Habitat Protection Manual for County Road Maintenance in Northwestern California Watersheds*, 5 Counties Salmonid Conservation Program
- *Handbook for Forest and Ranch Road: A Guide for planning, design, constructing, reconstructing, maintaining, closing wildland roads*, Pacific Watershed Associates
- *Low Volume Roads Engineering Best Management Practices Field Guide*, USFS
- *Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control, CPESC Exam Review Guide*
- *A Guide for the Management of Landslide-Prone Terrain in the Pacific Northwest*, BC Ministry of Forests

The project is proposed to be conducted through December 31, 2014, during the periods of extended dry weather, and adhering to standards set for through the MCDOT's Garcia TMDL Compliance documents and as addressed in the CEQA initial study.

The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 permit. The Applicant has also applied to California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a Streambed Alteration Agreement, Agreement.

The Mendocino County Department of Transportation, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has completed a Mitigated Negative Declaration with the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2012042016) on June 21, 2012, pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

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 project including maps and photos. 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 letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Jonathan Warmerdam at (707) 576-2468 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

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