

July 10, 2014

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

Rowland Gravel Bar
WDID 1B14053WNME

Mendocino County

On June 3, 2014, the North Coast Regional water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Wylatti Resource Management, Inc. (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for activities associated with the Rowland Gravel Bar Project (project). The project is located at the Rowland Bar on the Middle Fork Eel River, at Milepost 15.14 of State Highway 162, about one quarter mile southeast of the village of Dos Rios. The project includes extraction of sand and gravel from natural recruitment on a gravel bar just upstream from the confluence of the Mainstem Eel and the Middle Fork Eel Rivers, at latitude 39.71255°N, and longitude 123.34988°W. The project will cause temporary impacts to an unvegetated gravel bar approximately 3.5 acres in size, with no permanent impacts anticipated. No wetlands or riparian vegetation will be impacted. An existing access road from State Highway 162 to the gravel bar will be maintained as permanent access to the gravel bar.

The purpose of the project is to extract gravel at a sustainable rate from the Rowland Bar. The extraction amount is dependent upon natural recruitment from river geomorphological processes and will vary from no recruitment (and therefore no extraction) to a maximum anticipated extraction volume of 50,000 cubic yards. The typical level of extraction each year is anticipated to be approximately 25,000 cubic yards, but is entirely dependent upon natural recruitment.

Mitigation for temporary impacts to waters of the state include the implementation of the "alcove" method of extraction, establishment of non-disturbance buffers to the low water channel, and removal of a train car located within the ordinary high water mark. The project will employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction. The project would occur annually between July 15 and October 15, depending on the availability of naturally recruited gravel.

The Project has an approved Reclamation Plan through Mendocino County (Case # REC 2-2013) and the State Department of Conservation with Conditions of Approval made a part of that approval process. The Project has a 1600 Agreement (Notification No. 1600-2014-0108-R1) from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A 404 Permit has been applied for from the US Army Corps of Engineers. A Preliminary Jurisdictional map of the Project Area which falls in the Waters of the United States has been approved by the US Army Corps of Engineers. An Industrial SWPPP has been assigned WDID No. 123IO24781 by the State Water Resources Control Board.

The County of Mendocino, acting as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, filed a notice of determination with the state clearinghouse determining that a mitigated negative declaration had been approved for the project (SCH 2014022055). The notice of determination was received by the state clearinghouse on February 25, 2014.

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. 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 Kaete King at (707) 576-2848 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.