

December 12, 2014

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

**Bureau of Reclamation – Trinity River Restoration Program Course Sediment
Management Activities
WDID No. 1A09154WNTR**

Trinity County

On November 21, 2014, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received a letter from the Bureau of Reclamation – Trinity River Restoration Program, Robin Schrock (Applicant), requested reissuance of federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with the Trinity River Restoration Program Course Sediment Management Activities Project (Project). On January 20, 2010, the Regional Water Board issued a Water Quality Certification for the proposed activities which expires January 20, 2015. The proposed Project will cause temporary disturbances to waters of the United States and the State associated with five sites within the Trinity River Hydrologic Unit No. 106.31. The Applicant conducted course sediment injection activities during the previous permit cycle. The proposed Project sites for high flow course sediment injection remain unchanged and are located between the Lewiston Dam and Grass Valley Creek at the Trinity River Fish Hatchery (40.72511° N/122.80017° W), Lewiston Upstream (Weir Hole) (40.72021° N/122.80322° W), Lewiston Downstream (40.71089° N/122.80664° W), Sawmill (40.71113° N/122.81824° W), and Lowden Ranch (Bucktail) (40.69475° N/122.85575° W) along the Trinity River, Trinity County. No permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State are proposed. All impacts to waters, of the addition of clean native spawning river course sediment, are considered temporary.

The primary purpose of the Project is to restore aquatic habitat in the Trinity River by injecting course sediment (clean native gravel 3/8 to 5 inch diameter) to supplement course sediment removed from the system by the Lewiston Dam. The proposed Project would include introducing course sediment into the river primarily at high spring flows with heavy equipment or by using a conveyor system to carry the gravel to mid-channel locations. Course Sediment may also be directly placed in-channel with heavy equipment during summer low-flows conditions. The timing of gravel introduced is dependent on the water year and resulting allowable flows as prescribed in the Secretary of the Interior's 2000 Trinity River Record of Decision (ROD). The volume of course sediment to be added to the system is determined by the flow release schedule as well as sediment budget and transport computations. The proposed permit volume introduced may vary from a low of zero cubic yards (cy) in extremely dry years to a high of approximately 67,000 cy during extremely wet years as recommended in the ROD. The applicant anticipates placing up to approximately 10,000 cy with an average of approximately 2,000 cy each year into the system.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed project activities. The Project has been designed to avoid and minimize adverse impacts and permanent impacts to waters of the US and State. Non-compensatory mitigation for the proposed Project

includes best management practices for heavy equipment use in and near a waterway to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction. Additionally, Project impacts shall not increase turbidity levels at the point of compliance (500 linear feet downstream of the point impact) greater than 20% above naturally occurring background or 20 NTUs whichever is greater. Other appropriate mitigation measures identified in the Master Environmental Impact Report SCH#2008032110 finalized by the Regional Water Board on August 24, 2009 shall be incorporated into the order.

The Project is proposed to begin in 2015 through 2019 during annual river flow releases.

The Applicant has obtained authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 (File No. 2012-00369N) for these activities to be conducted under Nationwide Permit No. 27 and anticipates continued future permit coverage. The Applicant has determined that a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is not required for this project.

The Regional Water Board, as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), submitted a Joint Environmental Document including a Draft Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) and Environmental Assessment/Draft EIR (EA/DEIR) (SCH# 2008032110) for the initial project to the State Clearinghouse on June 5, 2009 for a 45-day review and comment period. The Regional Water Board issued the Final MEIR/EIR on August 24, 2009, and filed a Notice of Determination on August 25, 2009. The proposed Project is identical to the initial project proposed and authorized in 2009. Regional Water Board Staff have reviewed the MEIR findings and confirmed that applicable mitigation measures have been implemented and are up to date. Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15179, subd. (b)(1), the Regional Water Board proposes a finding that no substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the MEIR was certified, or that there is no new available information which was not known and could not be known at the time of the MEIR was certified. Therefore, this MEIR may be used in accordance with this article to review such a subsequent project and is considered adequate by the Regional Water Board.

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 Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.