

August 20, 2015

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

**Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District –
R.W. Mathews Dam/Ruth Lake Operations
WDID No. 1A04156WNTR**

Trinity County

On August 17, 2015, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received a request from the Humboldt County Municipal Water District (Applicant), for reissuance of Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with the R.W. Mathews Dam / Ruth Lake Operations Project (Project) ongoing maintenance of existing water supply structures and flow channels immediately downstream of R.W. Mathews Dam. The Regional Water Board issued a water quality certification for these exact activities on January 7, 2010, that expired January 7, 2015. The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Mad River in the Ruth Hydrologic Area No. 109.40. The Project is located immediately downstream of the R.W. Mathews Dam on Ruth Lake, Trinity County, at latitude 40.370033°N, and longitude 123.43404°W. No permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State are proposed. Temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State include approximately 180 linear feet of stream channel.

The Applicant supplies water for domestic and industrial uses to the greater Humboldt Bay area using structures located downstream near Essex that are dependent on flows from Ruth Lake and tributaries downstream of the dam. Proposed Project activities include maintenance of existing structures and flow channels, and removal of aggraded earthen materials from the spillway plunge pool and tailrace channel. Maintenance activities also include as needed repair of existing rock slope protection (RSP) and revetments between the plunge pool and tailrace outlet. Removing aggraded materials from the flow channels and maintenance of RSP areas is necessary to protect the existing water supply structures from erosion and damage that can be caused by heavy spillway flows. Any earthen materials removed from the plunge pool and channel areas will be placed above ordinary high water mark and above elevations that have flooded in the past. The tailrace channel and plunge pool areas subject to sediment and rock deposition are approximately 0.5 acre and 0.9 acre respectively. The Applicant estimates that periodic removal of up to 250 cubic yards of material may be required. The removal of aggraded materials from the channel areas will result in temporary impacts to 180 linear feet of stream channel. Proposed activities to maintain existing RSP and revetment areas will result in less than 0.01 acre of temporary impacts to the streambank.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed Project. Under Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Applicant elected to pursue an Incidental Take Permit for its Mad River activities and has an approved Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The purpose of the HCP is to describe conservation, mitigation, and monitoring measures that the Applicant will undertake to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts to three ESA

listed salmonid species: chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout. Noncompensatory mitigation includes the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control, and for operation of heavy equipment in the stream channel. Proposed activities are generally conducted between June 1 and October 15.

The Project is planned to begin in the summer of 2015 through the end of 2019 with annual construction work conducted as necessary, between June 1 and October 15.

The Applicant has obtained authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the Project under Individual Permit (File No. 2004-286840, expires December 31, 2019), pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The Applicant has also obtained a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Applicant adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND, SCH# 1999122026) for the project on January 27, 2000 and an Addendum to the MND on January 11, 2001, 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 notice 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 gil.falcone@waterboards.ca.gov at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten stephen.bargsten@waterboards.ca.gov at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.