

February 11, 2016

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

**Burke's Goldfields Habitat Enhancement Project at SACMA
WDID 1B15138WNSO**

Sonoma County

On October 19, 2015, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Jon Stout, Airport Manager, Sonoma County Airport (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 Burke's Goldfields Habitat Enhancement Project at SACMA (project). The proposed project would cause disturbances to waters of the United States and the state associated with seasonal wetland pools and swales, which drain toward Redwood Creek, tributary to Santa Rosa Creek and the Middle Russian River (114.23). The project is located on Ordinance Road in Santa Rosa across from the CAL FIRE air base, at latitude 38.515162°N and longitude 122.805094°W. Temporary impacts to waters of the United States and state would be approximately 1.478 acres.

The purpose of the project is to establish approximately two acres of occupied Burke's goldfields habitat to meet one of the mitigation requirements of multiple agency's permits for the Sonoma County Airport Runway Safety Enhancement Project (WDID 1B12182WNSO). The purpose must be achieved subject to two primary constraints. First, the work must meet Federal Aviation Administration guidelines that prevent habitat work that could attract hazardous wildlife. Therefore, the project must not increase the existing wetland habitat area on site. Second, the wetlands on site were constructed as mitigation for the wetland impacts of several projects on the Santa Rosa Plain and protected under a Restrictive Covenant. Therefore, the project must not decrease the existing wetland habitat area on site.

The project will involve modifying many of the existing vernal pools on the site to provide the soil and hydrologic conditions that will support Burke's Goldfields. Some existing pools will be filled and some will be excavated to achieve appropriate depths. Heavy equipment will be used for the earthwork, vernal pool plant species seeds will be salvaged, and topsoil will be stockpiled and reused in the pools. Burke's Goldfields seed will be collected from other sites and the newly modified pools will be inoculated. Grading and clearing work will be conducted between May 15 and October 15, depending on site conditions. Work is expected to take six to eight weeks.

Because the impacts of the project are temporary in nature and the project will improve soil and hydrologic conditions for Burke's Goldfields, no compensatory mitigation is

required. The project will employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction.

The applicant has applied for coverage under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit No. 27, Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Establishment and Enhancement Activities, pursuant to CWA, section 404.

On February 4, 2014, the County of Sonoma filed a Notice of Determination for the Environmental Impact Report Addendum for the Charles M. Schultz Sonoma County Airport Master Plan Implementation Project (SCH 2008062022) in order to comply with CEQA. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document, BMPs, and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.

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 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 at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.