

April 26, 2016

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

**California Department of Transportation
State Route 101, 162, and 253 Bridge Scour Repair Project
WDID No. 1B15147WNME, ECM PIN CW-819496
Caltrans EA No. 01-0A470, EFIS No. 01-1300-0026**

Mendocino County

On January 06, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to the proposed State Route 101, 162, and 243 Bridge Scour Repair Project (Project).

Project Description

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide scour protection to preserve the integrity of the structures and prevent further degradation of the existing facilities for five bridges located on State Route 101, 162, and 253 (SR 96, SR 162, SR 253). The Project locations are as follows.

Location	State Route (SR)	Post Mile (PM)	Receiving Water	Hydrologic Unit (Huc 8 & 10)
Robinson Creek Bridge	253	15.1	Russian River	Russian River - Upper Russian River
Austin Creek Bridge	101	23.8	Russian River	Russian River - Upper Russian River
Orrs Creek Bridge	101	25.0	Russian River	Russian River - Upper Russian River
Broadus Creek Bridge	101	46.6	Eel River	Upper Eel - Outlet Creek
Short Creek Bridge	162	0.7	Mill Creek to Middle Fork Eel River	Middle Fork Eel - Mill Creek

Proposed Project activities include the following:

Robinson Creek Bridge (PM 15.1)

- Remove vegetation, including two young manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos canescens* ssp. *canescens*) and two coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*) in order to construct access roads on the southeast and southwest sides of the bridge.

- Excavate soil at Pier 2 in preparation for rock slope protection (RSP)
- Place RSP to protect the pier from future scouring.
- Excavated soil will be spread throughout the site, outside of the ordinary high water mark, and all disturbed areas will be seeded with a native seed mix.

Austin Creek Bridge (PM 23.8)

- Remove vegetation, including Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*) in order to construct an access road on the west (southbound) side of SR 101.
- Native material will be excavated at the culvert inlet and backfilled with aggregate base.
- Holes will be drilled into the existing culvert floor to install dowels for attachment of the new concrete apron.
- Excavated soil will be spread throughout the site, outside of the ordinary high water mark, and all disturbed areas will be seeded with a native seed mix.

Orrs Creek Bridge (PM 25.0)

- Remove vegetation, including Himalayan blackberry, willow, and coyote brush in order to construct an access road from the median and southwest side of the southbound bridge.
- Dewater surface and subsurface water.
- Excavate a footing trench, place RSP fabric, and place RSP along the southern abutment slope (Abutment 1).
- Place RSP in a scour holes located on the north side of Pier 2 and south side of Pier 3.
- Upon completion of construction, remove all dewatering materials from the creek.
- Excavated soil will be spread throughout the site, outside of the ordinary high water mark, and all disturbed areas will be seeded with a native seed mix.

Broadus Creek Bridge (PM 0.7)

- Remove vegetation, including three big leaf maple trees in order to construct an access road from southwest side of the bridge.
- Dewater surface and subsurface water.
- Excavate soil, encroaching roots, and concrete slab debris from Abutment 1 slope
- Fill hole with aggregate base, drill dowels into existing slope in order to reinforce the new slope section
- Replace deteriorated area with a new slope paving constructed with concrete and reinforced steel.
- Upon completion of construction, remove all dewatering materials from the creek.
- Excavated soil will be spread throughout the site, outside of the ordinary high water mark, and all disturbed areas will be seeded with a native seed mix.

Short Creek Bridge (PM 25.0)

- Remove vegetation, including grasses, Himalayan blackberry, wild grape (*Vitis californica*), two Pacific madrones (*Arbutus menziesii*), one Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*), and one Oregon ash in order to construct an access road from north and southeast of the bridge.
- Dewater surface and subsurface water. A clear water diversion may be necessary to direct water down the center of the creek and away from the piers.
- Excavate soil and native material to create a footing trench for RSP.
- Place RSP in trench and scoured areas surrounding Pier 2 and Pier 3.
- Upon completion of construction, remove all diversion and dewatering materials from the creek.
- Excavated soil will be spread throughout the site, outside of the ordinary high water mark, and all disturbed areas will be seeded with a native seed mix Oregon ash poles will be planted along the creek banks.

Impacts

The proposed Project would result in approximately 176 linear feet (0.044 acres) of permanent impacts and 356 linear feet (0.166 acre) of temporary impacts to the stream banks of Robinson Creek Bridge, Austin Creek Bridge, Orrs Creek Bridge, Broaddus Creek Bridge, and Short Creek as a result of RSP placement for scour protection and slope repair. The project would also result in The proposed Project would result in approximately 125 linear feet (0.197 acres) of temporary impacts to the riparian areas and stream beds of Beaver Creek, Thompson Creek, and Seiad Creek as a result of construction access and riparian disturbance.

Proposed Mitigation

Caltrans will mitigate for permanent impacts to stream banks and riparian areas by incorporating bioengineering into the RSP and replanting trees at each bridge abutment and pier when feasible. All temporary impacts to riparian areas and stream beds will be revegetated as stated in the Simple Revegetation Plan dated February 2015.

Post-Construction Storm Water Treatment

Post-construction storm water treatment is not required because this project will not increase the area of impervious surface at the five bridge locations.

Construction Timing

The Project is expected to require 180 days of construction. The Project is proposed to begin on the June 15, 2016, and be completed on October 15, 2016.

Disturbed Ground Area

Project implementation will result in less than one acre of disturbed soil area. Caltrans shall utilize appropriate erosion control, sediment control, and site management Best Management Practices to prevent discharge of pollutants during construction.

Total Maximum Daily Load and Water Impairment

The Eel River is identified as impaired for sediment and temperature under Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Erosion is identified as a contributing source to sediment impairment. Caltrans will utilize appropriate erosion control, sediment control, and site management BMPs to control pollutants during construction, and drainage improvements will result in a net reduction in sediment contributions. Accordingly, this certification does not certify any activities that would contribute to Eel River sediment or temperature impairment.

Other Agency Permits

Caltrans has applied for coverage under a reporting U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit No. 14, *Linear Transportation Projects*, pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Caltrans has applied for a Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and a Biological Opinion from the National Marine Fisheries Service.

CEQA Compliance

On March 21, 2016, Caltrans signed a Notice of Determination approving a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2015042057) in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act.

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 phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within 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 or comments, please contact staff member Brandon Stevens at (707) 576-2377 or Brandon.Stevens@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of Caltrans's proposed activities. The Regional Water Board's Project file includes the application for certification and additional details of the proposed Project, including maps and design drawings. Project documents and any comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.