

October 6, 2016

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

**Alton South Conservation Site
ECM PIN CW-796120; WDID 1B13078WNSO**

Sonoma County

On September 16, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received a revised application from Mr. Harvey O. Rich (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to the proposed Alton South Conservation Site Project (project).

Project Location

The project is located at 2779 Piner Road in Santa Rosa, at latitude 38.469917°N and longitude 122.778003°W. The proposed project would cause disturbances to seasonal wetlands within the Middle Russian River hydrologic area (114.22). The conservation site was once converted to a vineyard but has been abandoned for almost a decade. The site contains approximately 0.63 acres of seasonal wetlands consisting mainly of three swales, one of which flows into a concrete culvert at Piner Road.

Project Description

The purpose of the project is to enhance existing seasonal wetlands, create new vernal pools, and provide habitat for Burke's goldfields. The two goals of the project are to satisfy the Burke's goldfields mitigation requirements of the Sonoma County Airport Runway Safety Enhancement Project (WDID 1B12182WNSO) and to create credits for sale for the establishment of rare plant species and creation and enhancement of wetlands.

Approximately 0.01 acre of existing seasonal wetland habitat will be partially filled to establish a connection with swales and pools on the site. A further 0.15 acre of existing seasonal wetland habitat will be excavated to remove weedy species and expose soils that are favorable to rare plant species, including Burke's goldfields.

To limit their productivity and enhance the establishment and persistence of native vernal pool plant species, the bottoms of the constructed pools will be excavated into relatively infertile subsoil and will not be recovered with topsoil. Together with the design period of inundation, this design practice will retard or prevent establishment of unwanted species that can interfere with the germination and establishment of native plant species. The construction process will be supervised by Dr. Larry Stromberg or Dr. Ted Winfield.

Construction Timing

The project is expected to occur in the fall of 2016 or the summer and fall of 2017, and is estimated to take 3-4 weeks.

Impacts

The project will temporarily impact approximately 0.16 acre of existing seasonal wetlands.

Mitigation for Project Impacts

Compensatory mitigation is not required because the project intended enhance and create approximately 1.52 acres of wetlands.

Other Agency Permits

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

CEQA

As lead agency, the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department certified an Environmental Impact Report for the Sonoma County Airport Master Plan Project (SCH 2008062022), pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which included analysis of this wetland project.

Public Comments

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 Kaete King at (707) 576-2848 or Kaete.King@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant'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.