

October 27, 2016

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

**Hearst Willits Road Culvert Replacement, CR 306, MP 1.68 Project
WDID No. 1B16916WNME**

Mendocino County

On June 27, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Mendocino Department of Transportation, Alex Straessle (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with the Hearst Willits Road Culvert Replacement, CR 306, MP 16.8 Project (Project). The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with an unnamed tributary to Berry Creek within the Eel River Hydrologic Unit No. 111.61. The Project is at milepost 1.68 along Hearst Willits Road, Willits, Mendocino County, at latitude 38.4258°N, and longitude 123.3269°W. Permanent impacts to waters of the United States include placement of Rock Slope Stabilization (RSP) along approximately 42 linear feet of the banks of the unnamed tributary to Berry Creek. No temporary impacts are proposed.

The primary purpose of the Project is to replace two failing culverts with one concrete box culvert and stabilize the inlet and outlet banks. The proposed Project would include replacing two existing 48" x 45' perched culverts with one 10' x 6' x 45' concrete box culvert. The new culvert will be countersunk two feet below stream grade and backfilled with existing native streambed material. The new culvert will widen and enhance channel capacity and function. Cast-in-place wing walls will be constructed at the upstream and downstream ends of the new box culvert. The in-channel work being proposed will occur when the streambed is dry. Alternatively, the Project includes a dewatering plan if there is a small amount of water in the work area. Bank stabilization upstream of the culvert includes placement of approximately 18 linear feet of RSP. Downstream bank stabilization will include placement approximately 24 linear feet of RSP, including bioengineered design using native pole plantings where applicable and gradually tapering the banks to a 2:1 slope downstream.

The proposed Project will widen channel capacity and enhance functions of the tributary within the culverted area and includes native plantings at top of bank and bioengineered designs which mitigate permanent impacts to the creek channel. The Project includes the *Revegetation and Monitoring Plan for Hearst Willits Road Culvert Replacement* submitted by the Applicant on October 26, 2016, to revegetate disturbed areas, including native pole plantings within the RSP and native riparian at top of bank where described in the plan. The Applicant proposes to monitor the revegetation to ensure 85% planting success criteria are met after 5 years. The Applicant proposes to use best management practices (BMPs) to ensure there is no discharge of concrete from wing wall construction into the active channel and that curing concrete shall not impact surface water pH. Further, the Project proposes to employ BMPs to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction.

The Project is planned to be conducted in 2017, between May 15 and October 15, with construction work planned to last approximately 20 days.

The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 permit. The Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement.

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that the Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, 15302 (c) Replacement or Reconstruction, and will file a Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse concurrent with issuance of the 401 Water Quality Certification, 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.