

October 31, 2016

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

**Bay Flat Road Ditch Excavation Project  
WDID No. 1B161013WNSO**

**Sonoma County**

On July 28, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with the Bay Flat Road Ditch Excavation Project (Project). The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with wetlands within the Bodega Hydrologic Unit No. 115.21. The Project is located along Bay Flat Road in Bodega, Sonoma County, at latitude 38.336025°N, and longitude 123.056486°W. No permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. are proposed. Temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. include approximately 0.03 acres of wetlands.

The primary purpose of the Project is to excavate roadside ditches for flood control purposes. The proposed Project would include removal of sediment and invasive plants at six adjacent locations along Bay Flat Road. The ditches currently receive storm water from the road and hillslope seeps, and exhibit wetland swale characteristics. The Project will include excavation of the ditch to the design depth of one foot and 3.5 feet wide. Excavation will not permanently change hydrology but allow for greater capacity to address current flooding since the ditches have not been cleared since the 1990s. The ditches should continue to exhibit wetland swale characteristic with regrowth of the native plants and thus, impacts to 0.03 acres of wetlands will be temporary.

The proposed Project includes a plan to remove trash and debris within the Project area and to permanently remove invasive Pampas grass and Himalayan blackberry within the Project's wetland feature area to offset temporary impacts to the wetlands. The Project proposes to employ best management practices 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 10 days.

The Applicant has obtained authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 (Nationwide Permit No. 3 File No. 2016-00251N). The Applicant has applied to the California Coastal Commission to obtain a Coastal Development Permit.

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, 15301 (c) Existing Facilities, 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](mailto:Gil.Falcone@waterboards.ca.gov) at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten [Stephen.Bargsten@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Stephen.Bargsten@waterboards.ca.gov) at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.