

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Quality
Water Quality Certification Program

**Public Notice
of
Amendment to Water Quality Certification**

Pursuant to federal law (Title 33, United States Code, Section 1341; Clean Water Act Section 401), applicants for a federal license or permit for activities which may discharge to waters of the United States must seek Water Quality Certification from the state or Indian tribe with jurisdiction. Such Certification is based on a finding that the discharge will meet water quality standards and other applicable requirements. In California, Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) issue or deny Certification for discharges within their geographical jurisdiction. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) has this responsibility for projects affecting waters within multiple Regional Water Board jurisdictions.

The following information is provided in satisfaction of the public notice requirements of Section 3858, Title 23, of the California Code of Regulations, which govern the State's Certification Program.

Applicant: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

Applicant Contact: Kim Batchelder

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Project Name: North Slope Sonoma Mountain Ridge Trail Project

Date of Application: April 3, 2009

**Public Notice for Amendment of Water Quality Certification
Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
North Slope Sonoma Mountain Ridge Trail Project**

Affected Counties: Sonoma and Napa

General Location: The trail is located on the north slope of Sonoma Mountain in southeastern Sonoma County, and connects with Jack London State Historic Park (JLHSP) to the east and Jacobs Ranch to the west. The trail traverses six properties: Jacobs Ranch, Cooper's Grove, Sonoma Mountain Woodlands, Wilroth, Skiles Ranch, and JLHSP.

Project Description: On October 13, 2009, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) issued a Water Quality Certification to the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (applicant). On June 13, 2011 State Water Board staff received a letter from the applicant requesting an amendment to the Federal Clean Water Act; section 401 Water Quality Certification for activities related to the North Slope Sonoma Mountain Ridge Trail Project. On September 16, 2011 State Water Board staff received a revised amendment request from the applicant. The purpose of the overall project is to create a 4.25 mile multi-use trail to accommodate hikers, equestrians, and mountain bicyclists. The

purpose of the amendment is change 2 of the 16 creek crossings that were covered in the original Water Quality Certification and extend the project activity deadline for construction within waters of the State from October 15 to October 31. The applicant is proposing to change the design of two creek crossings from backcountry bridge crossings to armored ford crossings (wet crossings).

The proposed armored fords are in drainages 9 and 10 on the Wilroth property. Drainage 9 is located along the southeastern extent and drainage 10 is located along the southwestern extent of the Wilroth property. The rationale for the change from bridge to an armored ford is that past storms damaged the western bank of drainage 10, and the proposed armored ford crossing will allow the stream to function naturally while avoiding the need for concrete abutments. The other armored ford stream crossings along the trail performed well under the storm events of the past year.

Projected impacts to Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State:

Total Permanent Impacts Drainage 9 = 0.001 acres and 0.89 cubic yards to the channel.
Total Permanent Impacts Drainage 10 = 0.001 acres and 0.89 cubic yards to the channel.

The original project description for all other project activities shall remain as described in the original Water Quality Certification.

The US Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) Nationwide Permits for this project (NWP# 33 and 42) expire by the end of 2011.

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, acting as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), approved the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project on November 15, 2007.

Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. 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 letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Woody at (916) 341-5785 or CWoody@waterboards.ca.gov

Date Posted: September 20, 2011

State Water Resources Control Board Staff Contact:

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Note: No regulatory decision on the application is implied or intended in this public notice.