



COUNTY OF SONOMA
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JILL RAVITCH
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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 16, 2011

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Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California

**Caltrans and Contractor O.C. Jones & Sons to Pay \$315,000 to Settle
Alleged Environmental Violations Related to Highway 101
Widening Project between Steele Lane and Windsor**

Sonoma County District Attorney Jill Ravitch announced today that her office, in conjunction with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region ("Regional Water Board"), reached a settlement with the California Department of Transportation ("Caltrans"), and its primary contractor, O.C. Jones & Sons, Inc. ("O.C. Jones"), for alleged environmental violations related to the Highway 101 widening project in Sonoma County between Steele Lane and Windsor. Caltrans and O.C. Jones stipulated to an Administrative Civil Liability Order before the Regional Water Board requiring them to pay a total civil liability of \$315,000. The District Attorney and the Regional Water Board alleged that between February and November 2009, on multiple occasions, Caltrans and O.C. Jones failed to comply with various provisions of the Clean Water Act 401 Certification and the Caltrans Storm Water Permit related to the project, which contributed to discharges of sediment and sediment-laden water into several creeks and waterways along Highway 101 between Steele Lane and Windsor. The violations, included the failure to properly implement various Best Management Practices, including ceasing work during forecasted periods of rain, properly placing straw wattles, drainage bags, and other practices, that contributed to the discharges.

District Attorney Jill Ravitch said: "Protecting this County's beautiful streams and waterways, and the fish, plants, and wildlife that live within them will be a priority for my office."

Pursuant to the Order, Caltrans and O.C. Jones will pay \$121,470 to the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation to be administered by the California Department of Fish & Game ("DFG") for natural resource restoration projects that improve water quality in Sonoma County, \$18,530 to DFG to reimburse the costs of the investigation and the evaluation of the impact on the affected resources, \$100,000 to the District Attorney's Office and \$75,000 to the Regional Water Board's Cleanup and Abatement Account. Regional Water Board Assistant Executive Officer Luis Rivera stated: "Resolving this complex case without further litigation is a fair outcome, and Caltrans and its contractors will work with staff to prevent impacts on water quality during all future freeway construction in Sonoma County."

The case was investigated by DFG Lieutenant Kyle Hiatt, as well as Regional Water Board Engineer Mona Dougherty, and prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Matthew Cheever and State Water Board, Office of Enforcement Attorney Julie Macedo.