

June 26, 2018

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

**Reggae on the River Seasonal Bridge Installation  
40.00966, -123.78718  
CW-650372, WDID 1B05083WNHU**

**Humboldt County**

On June 22, 2018, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Alisha Goodrich, representing the Mateel Community Center (applicant), requesting federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities associated with annual installation and removal of a temporary bridge crossing over the South Fork Eel River, proposed Reggae on the River Seasonal Bridge Installation, South Fork Eel River (project) near the town of Piercy, in Humboldt County.

**Project Description**

The purpose of the proposed temporary bridge crossing is to provide access to the east side of the river for parking, camping, and activities associated with the annual Reggae on the River concert event. The Reggae on the River concert event and proposed temporary bridge crossing are located on the east side of Highway 101 in the Cooks Valley area, approximately 0.7 mile north of the intersection of Cooks Valley Road and Highway 101, on property known as French's Camp near Piercy in Humboldt County. The proposed bridge installation and removal activities will cause temporary disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the South Fork Eel River in the Benbow Hydrologic Subarea No. 111.32.

The proposed project includes installation of two parallel and adjacent bridges at one location across the South Fork Eel River to provide access for vehicles and pedestrians. The proposed temporary bridge crossing consists of two steel-frame flatcars installed side-by-side. The flatcars are 9-feet 4-inches wide and they have a maximum span of 56-feet between the abutments. It is anticipated that the wetted channel will be less than 50-feet wide at the temporary crossing location at the time of bridge installation and removal. The rail car frames are placed on pre-cast interlocking concrete block abutments, with each end resting on native river-run gravel. The bridge will have a channel span of 50 feet. If either abutment is placed in the wetted channel, clean washed gravel will be placed as a foundation pad. The western abutment will be installed first. The excavator will cross the river to install the east abutment and to lift the flatcars into place on the abutments. The excavator will avoid and minimize wet river crossings by using the first installed bridge deck to complete the crossing installation and to return to the west side. The bridge will remain in place no later than September 15 annually. Work to place the bridge and approach roads, will require the movement of 450 cubic yards of native gravel along 14,400 square feet of the banks of the Eel River. Following annual removal of the temporary bridges, native aggregate material that was used to form the abutments will be

returned to the borrow areas and re-graded as necessary to restore the gravel bar area while leaving no depressions or berms that may potentially trap fish or cause impacts to surrounding habitats.

The flatcar frames will be decked with 12-inch wide by 4-inch thick pressure-treated lumber. One deck will be 13 feet wide and used as the emergency vehicle lane. The other deck will be 16 feet wide and will include a 10-foot-wide vehicle lane and a pedestrian lane that will be cantilevered off the side of the steel frame using the decking lumber. Lumber used on the bridges will be cut to length and drilled for fasteners prior to being brought to the site. Safety rails will be installed after the flatcars and decking are installed.

### **Receiving Waters**

The proposed project would occur on the South Fork Eel River gravel bars and temporarily impact 43,000 square feet of streambed and 72 linear feet of the streambank annually. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in any permanent impacts to the streambed or channel. Compensatory mitigation is not required. Noncompensatory mitigation includes the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and turbidity control, and for operation of heavy equipment in a stream channel. The project is located along the South Fork Eel River in the Benbow Hydrologic Subarea No. 111.32.

### **Impacts**

A Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) (SCH No. 2012082108) was prepared for the project in order to comply with CEQA. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document. The SEIR identifies that the project will have potentially significant effects on the environment within Regional Water Board jurisdiction including: 1) substantial adverse effect on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community; 2) substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means; 3) violation of water quality standard or waste discharge requirements; and, 4) could otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Proposed measures are expected to mitigate these potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. Proposed construction methods, BMPs, and applicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant impacts on the environment will be incorporated as enforceable conditions of a water quality certification order issued for the project.

The applicant has applied for an Incidental Take Permit for the state listed Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (*Rana boylei*). A California Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist will be on-site to disperse fish, amphibians, and other aquatic species in the crossing area.

No chemical dust suppressants including Dust-Off will be applied to roads or graded areas located on the gravel bars including approaches to the gravel bars. Clear water applied by water trucks is acceptable for dust control, and shall not be discharged to the wetted channel or to the bridge.

**Other Agency Permits and Actions**

The applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404 (pending). The applicant has applied for an Incidental Take Permit with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the state listed Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (*Rana boylei*) (pending). The applicant has also applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (pending). Humboldt County Planning Commission issued a Conditional Use Permit.

**CEQA**

On February 14, 2013, the County of Humboldt certified a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) (SCH No. 2012082108).

**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 Scott Gergus (707) 576-2685 or [Scott.Gergus@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Scott.Gergus@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.