

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

December 12, 2025

Loren Metzger
USGS
6000 J Street, Placer Hall
Sacramento, CA 95819
lmetzger@usgs.gov

Dear Loren Metzger:

Subject: Notice of Applicability (NOA) for Coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order 2004-0004-DWQ for Dredged or Fill Discharges to Waters Deemed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to be Outside of Federal Jurisdiction

File: USGS Smith River Project, WDID No. 1A25175WNSI, ECM PIN No. CW-903801

On December 2, 2025, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received a Notice of Intent (NOI), on behalf of the United States Geological Survey (Applicant), to comply with the terms of, and obtain coverage under, the State Water Resources Control Water Quality Order 2004-0004-DWQ for Dredged or Fill Discharges to Waters Deemed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to be Outside of Federal Jurisdiction (General WDR) for the USGS Scott River Project (Project).

The Project is located within the Scott River Hydrologic Area 105.40. The Project is located at CA State Route 3 overpass near the town of Fort Jones. Coordinates of the Project are approximately Latitude 41.595460, Longitude -122.851612.

Work will take place during the 2025/2026 wet weather season. Work during this period is appropriate as year-round monitoring data is essential to understanding the relationship between seasonal variations in surface and ground water flow and seasonal changes in water quality. In turn, this will guide future decisions regarding minimum instream flow requirements in the watershed.

Regional Water Board staff determined that the Project, as described in the NOI, will not have a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from CEQA review and meets the eligibility requirements for coverage under the General WDR. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the project activities do not require a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Project Purpose and Description:

The purpose of the Project is to take instream flows and water quality parameters that will contribute to the development of long-term flow efforts in the Scott River. It is part of ongoing efforts to protect anadromous salmonids in the Scott River watershed. A stream gage, consisting of a bubble-gage orifice and a data collection platform for data storage and telemetry, will be mounted on the creek bank. A shelter located upslope of the watercourse will house most of this equipment. Two-inch diameter galvanized steel pipe and 4-inch PVC pipe will run from the equipment shelter to the river. They will be secured to any existing features that offer stability such as rocks, riprap, etc. In the absence of these features, pipes will either be secured to fence posts driven into the ground or to 1 and 2-inch drive pins hammered into the ground to a depth of up to 18-inches. Shallow trenching may be necessary to secure and conceal piping. Impacts to waters of the state are largely limited to bank slopes/riparian areas with minor impacts to the wetted channel from gage placement.

The Project will permanently impact approximately 0.01 acres and less than 400 linear feet of streambed and riparian habitat. The Project shall be executed as described within application materials.

Receiving Water: Scott River, Scott River Hydrologic Area 105.40,

Filled / Excavated Area: Permanently Impacted: 0.01 acres (streambed and riparian).

Total Linear Impacts: Permanently Impacted: less than 400 linear feet (streambed and riparian).

Latitude/Longitude: 41.595460, -122.851612.

Regional Water Board staff determined that the proposed activities may proceed under the General WDRs. A Notice of Completion (NOC) shall be submitted to the Regional Water Board by the applicant no later than 30 days after the project has been completed. A complete NOC includes at a minimum: photographs with descriptive titles or captions, dates taken, the name of the photographic site, the WDID number and ECM PIN number indicated above and success criteria for the project. The NOC shall

demonstrate that the Project has been carried out in accordance with the Project description as provided in the applicant's NOI. Please, include the project name, WDID

number and ECM PIN number with all future inquiries and document submittals. Document submittals to the Regional Water Board shall be made electronically to: NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov

An application fee was not required for this Project because the United States Geological Survey is a Federal Agency and Federal Agencies are exempt from fees.

The Applicant must notify the Regional Water Board at the end of the construction with an NOC to request to make the Project historical. Regional Water Board staff may request a site visit at the end of the Project to confirm the status of the Project and compliance with the Order.

This authorization for dredge and fill activities expires on December 12, 2030. Conditions and monitoring requirements outlined in the General WDR are not subject to the expiration date outlined above and remain in full effect and are enforceable.

Regional Water Board staff determined that the proposed activities may proceed under the General WDR.

Please contact Ryan Bey at ryan.bey@waterboards.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


On Behalf Of
Water Boards

Digitally signed by Jonathan Warmerdam
Date: 2025.12.12 12:36:21 -08'00'

Valerie Quinto
Executive Officer

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Weblink: [Clean Water Act Section 401 – Certification and Wetlands Program | California State Water Quality Control Board](#) can be found here:

(https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalorders.html)

cc.

State Water Resources Control Board, Stateboard401@waterboards.ca.gov

EPA Region 9, R9cwa401@epa.gov

Loren Metzger, USGS, lmetzger@usgs.gov

Zachary Zwahlen, Division of Water Rights, Zachary.Zwahlen@Waterboards.ca.gov