

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

Mr. Brian Stark
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 1092
Ojai, CA 93024

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED
No. 7007 2560 0001 7889 6538

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED RICE CREEK RE-ALIGNMENT AND RESTORATION PROJECT (Corps' Project No. 1999-15223-LM), VENTURA RIVER, OJAI, VENTURA COUNTY (File No. 11-131)

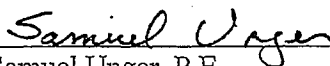
Dear Mr. Stark:

Board staff has reviewed your request on behalf of Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (Applicant) for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification for the above-referenced project. Your application was deemed complete on November 1, 2012.

I hereby issue an order certifying that any discharge from the referenced project will comply with the applicable provisions of sections 301 (Effluent Limitations), 302 (Water Quality Related Effluent Limitations), 303 (Water Quality Standards and Implementation Plans), 306 (National Standards of Performance), and 307 (Toxic and Pretreatment Effluent Standards) of the Clean Water Act, and with other applicable requirements of State law. This discharge is also regulated under State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 2003 - 0017 - DWQ, "General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredge and Fill Discharges that have received State Water Quality Certification" which requires compliance with all conditions of this Water Quality Certification.

The Applicant shall be liable civilly for any violations of this Certification in accordance with the California Water Code. This Certification does not eliminate the Applicant's responsibility to comply with any other applicable laws, requirements and/or permits.

Should you have questions concerning this Certification action, please contact Dana Cole, Section 401 Program, at (213) 576-5733.



Samuel Unger, P.E.
Executive Officer

Dec. 5, 2012
Date

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Bill Orme (via electronic copy)
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Quality
P.O. Box 944213
Sacramento, CA 94244-2130

Jessie Altstatt
Santa Barbara Channel Keeper
714 Bond Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Natasha Lohmus (via electronic copy)
California Department of Fish and Game
Streambed Alteration Team
4949 View Ridge Avenue
San Diego, CA 92123

Nathan Alley, Staff Attorney
Environmental Defense Center
906 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Crystal Huerta
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch, Ventura Field Office
2151 Alessandro Drive, Suite 255
Ventura, CA 93001

Paul Amato (via electronic copy)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Diane Noda
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003

ATTACHMENT A

Project Information
File No. 11-131

1. Applicant: Mr. Brian Stark
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 1092
Ojai, CA 93024

Phone: (805) 649-6852 x3 Fax: (805) 649-8913
2. Project Name: Rice Creek Re-Alignment and Restoration Project
3. Project Location: Ojai, Ventura County

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
34.45746	-119.29502
34.45738	-119.29466
34.45708	-119.29480
34.45720	-119.29510
34.45520	-119.29463
34.45530	-119.29427
34.45501	-119.29422
34.45498	-119.29457

4. Type of Project: Restoration
5. Project Purpose: To re-route Rice Creek, an ephemeral tributary of the Ventura River, from a man-made diversion ditch back into its historic route.
6. Project Description: This project will re-route Rice Creek, an ephemeral tributary of the Ventura River, from a man-made diversion ditch and back into its historic route. Earthwork for the project will consist of modifications at the upstream and downstream extents of the project site. At the upstream end, the existing channel will be plugged to divert water into the historic channel. It will also be necessary to configure the confluence of the new channel with the remnant historical channel. A pool structure was added in the

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upstream reach to help manage water velocity and to create more aquatic habitat; the flow of Rice Creek is being directed into a remnant channel still existing on the site. Mulching, bank protection, and revegetation will be used to ensure that erosion is managed effectively. The project is proposing to begin September 15, 2011 with the completion of earth work anticipated on October 30, 2011. 0.2 acres of unvegetated streambed is expected to be permanently impacted.

7. Federal Agency/Permit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
NWP No. 27 and 33 SPL-1999-15223-LM
8. Other Required Regulatory Approvals: California Department of Fish and Game
Streambed Alteration Agreement
9. California Environmental Quality Act Compliance: A Mitigated Negative Declaration was completed by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board On November XX.
10. Receiving Water: Ventura River (Hydrologic Unit No. 402.20)
11. Designated Beneficial Uses: MUN, IND, PROC, AGR, GWR, FRSH, REC-1, REC-2, WARM, COLD, WILD, RARE, MIGR, SPWN, WET
12. Impacted Waters of the United States: Non-wetland waters (unvegetated streambed): 0.00 temporary and 0.2 permanent acres
13. Dredge Volume: A total of 265 cubic yards of material will be deposited in the existing (to be abandoned) channel).
14. Related Projects Implemented/to be Implemented by the Applicant: Two small stream bank protection projects are planned on Wills Creek, a nearby tributary of the Ventura River. These projects will include bio-engineered structures using live willows for stream bank stabilization. These will have a combined footprint of under 0.05 acres and do not involve excavation or fill.

A stream bank stabilization project was implemented by OVLC in 2008 on a reach of the Ventura River about 4 miles downstream.

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This involved the installation of live willow siltation baffles on a portion of the floodplain and reshaping and revegetation of the eroded bank. This project has no adverse impacts and has successfully stabilized the stream bank.

15. Avoidance/ Minimization Activities:

The Applicant has proposed to implement several Best Management Practices, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The project schedule has been established such that the project site will be dry during construction. This will prevent any run-off from the site during construction.
- Because the stream is being re-directed through a historic channel that is already protected with grasses, the Applicant will not be excavating the new channel. This prevents the disturbance of soil and reduces erosion potential.
- The plug in the existing diversion will consist of compacted soil and rip rap. Facing rock will prevent erosion of this structure.
- The entire site, including excavated areas and the entire length of the project site, will be revegetated using native plants. Approximately 10,000 native plants will be installed over 2 seasons.
- All disturbed soil on the site will be covered with wood chip mulch following the earthwork. Wood chips will be manufactured on-site using existing dead orange trees and a tub grinder. These chips will also be used to enhance soil moisture capacity as part of the revegetation effort.
- Disturbed areas will also be seeded with native grasses to promote erosion control.

16. Proposed Compensatory Mitigation:

None

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17. Required
Compensatory
Mitigation:

Since the project is restoration, the Regional Board will not require any compensatory mitigation.

See *Attachment B, Conditions of Certifications, Additional Conditions* for modifications and additions to the above proposed compensatory mitigation.

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Conditions of Certification File No. 11-131

STANDARD CONDITIONS

Pursuant to §3860 of Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations (23 CCR), the following three standard conditions shall apply to this project:

1. This Certification action is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including review and amendment pursuant to §13330 of the California Water Code and Article 6 (commencing with 23 CCR §3867).
2. This Certification action is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any activity involving a hydroelectric facility and requiring a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license or an amendment to a FERC license unless the pertinent Certification application was filed pursuant to 23 CCR Subsection 3855(b) and the application specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.
3. Certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required pursuant to 23 CCR Chapter 28 and owed by the Applicant.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS

Pursuant to 23 CCR §3859(a), the Applicant shall comply with the following additional conditions:

1. The Applicant shall submit to this Regional Board copies of any other final permits and agreements required for this project, including, but not limited to, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (ACOE) Section 404 Permit and the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) Streambed Alteration Agreement. **These documents shall be submitted prior to any discharge to waters of the State.**
2. The Applicant shall adhere to the most stringent conditions indicated with either this Certification, the CDFG's Streambed Alteration Agreement, or the ACOE Section 404 Permit.
3. The Applicant shall comply with all water quality objectives, prohibitions, and policies set forth in the *Water Quality Control Plan, Los Angeles Region (1994)*, as amended.
4. The Avoidance/Minimization activities proposed by the Applicant as described in Attachment A, No. 15, are incorporated as additional conditions herein.
5. The Applicant and all contractors employed by the Applicant shall have copies of this Certification, and all other regulatory approvals for this project on site at all times and shall be familiar with all conditions set forth.

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6. Fueling, lubrication, maintenance, operation, and storage of vehicles and equipment shall not result in a discharge or a threatened discharge to waters of the State. At no time shall the Applicant use any vehicle or equipment which leaks any substance that may impact water quality. Staging and storage areas for vehicles and equipment shall be located outside of waters of the State.
7. All excavation, construction, or maintenance activities shall follow best management practices to minimize impacts to water quality and beneficial uses. Dust control activities shall be conducted in such a manner that will not produce downstream runoff.
8. No construction material, spoils, debris, or any other substances associated with this project that may adversely impact water quality standards, shall be located in a manner which may result in a discharge or a threatened discharge to waters of the State. Designated spoil and waste areas shall be visually marked prior to any excavation and/or construction activity, and storage of the materials shall be confined to these areas.
9. All waste or dredged material removed shall be relocated to a legal point of disposal if applicable. A legal point of disposal is defined as one for which Waste Discharge Requirements have been established by a California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and is in full compliance therewith.
10. The Applicant shall implement all necessary control measures to prevent the degradation of water quality from the proposed project in order to maintain compliance with the Basin Plan. The discharge shall meet all effluent limitations and toxic and effluent standards established to comply with the applicable water quality standards and other appropriate requirements, including the provisions of Sections 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307 of the Clean Water Act. This Certification does not authorize the discharge by the applicant for any other activity than specifically described in the 404 Permit.
11. The discharge shall not: a) degrade surface water communities and populations including vertebrate, invertebrate, and plant species; b) promote the breeding of mosquitoes, gnats, black flies, midges, or other pests; c) alter the color, create visual contrast with the natural appearance, nor cause aesthetically undesirable discoloration of the receiving waters; d) cause formation of sludge deposits; or e) adversely affect any designated beneficial uses.
12. The Applicant shall allow the Regional Board and its authorized representative entry to the premises, including all mitigation sites, to inspect and undertake any activity to determine compliance with this Certification, or as otherwise authorized by the California Water Code.
13. Application of pesticides must be supervised by a certified applicator and be in conformance with manufacturer's specifications for use. Compounds used must be appropriate to the target species and habitat. All pesticides directed toward aquatic species must be approved

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by the Regional Board. Pesticide utilization shall be in accordance with State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order Nos. 2004-0008-DWQ and 2004-0009-DWQ.

14. The Applicant shall not conduct any construction activities within waters of the State during a rainfall event. The Applicant shall maintain a **five-day (5-day) clear weather forecast** before conducting any operations within waters of the State.
15. If rain is predicted after operations have begun, grading activities must cease immediately and the site must be stabilized to prevent impacts to water quality, and minimize erosion and runoff from the site.
16. The Applicant shall utilize the services of a qualified biologist with expertise in riparian assessments during any vegetation clearing activities. The biologist shall be available on site during construction activities to ensure that all protected areas are marked properly and ensure that no vegetation outside the specified areas is removed. The biologist shall have the authority to stop the work, as necessary, if instructions are not followed. The biologist shall be available upon request from this Regional Board for consultation within 24 hours of request of consultation.
17. No activities shall involve wet excavations (i.e., no excavations shall occur below the seasonal high water table). A minimum **5-foot** buffer zone shall be maintained above the existing groundwater level. If construction or groundwater dewatering is proposed or anticipated, the Applicant shall file a **Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD)** to this Regional Board and obtain any necessary NPDES permits/Waste Discharge Requirements prior to discharging waste.
18. All project/construction/maintenance activities not included in this Certification, and which may require a permit, must be reported to the Regional Board for appropriate permitting. Bank stabilization and grading, as well as any other ground disturbances, are subject to restoration and revegetation requirements, and may require additional Certification action.
19. All surface waters, including ponded waters, shall be diverted away from areas undergoing grading, construction, excavation, vegetation removal, and/or any other activity which may result in a discharge to the receiving water. If surface water diversions are anticipated, the Applicant shall develop and submit a **Surface Water Diversion Plan (plan)** to this Regional Board. The plan shall include the proposed method and duration of diversion activities, structure configuration, construction materials, equipment, erosion and sediment controls, and a map or drawing indicating the locations of diversion and discharge points. Contingency measures shall be a part of this plan to address various flow discharge rates. The plan shall be submitted prior to any surface water diversions. If surface flows are present, then upstream and downstream monitoring for the following shall be implemented:

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- pH
- temperature
- dissolved oxygen
- turbidity
- total suspended solids(TSS)

Analyses must be performed using approved US Environmental Protection Agency methods, where applicable. These constituents shall be measured at least once prior to diversion and then monitored for on a daily basis during the first week of diversion and/or dewatering activities, and then on a weekly basis, thereafter, until the in-stream work is complete.

Results of the analyses shall be submitted to this Regional Board by the 15th day of each subsequent sampling month. A map or drawing indicating the locations of sampling points shall be included with each submittal. Diversion activities shall not result in the degradation of beneficial uses or exceedance of water quality objectives of the receiving waters. Downstream TSS shall be maintained at ambient levels. Where natural turbidity is between 0 and 50 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU), increases shall not exceed 20%. Where natural turbidity is greater than 50 NTU, increases shall not exceed 10%. Any such violations may result in corrective and/or enforcement actions, including increased monitoring and sample collection.

20. The Applicant shall restore any areas of TEMPORARY IMPACTS to waters of the United States and all other areas of temporary disturbance which could result in a discharge or a threatened discharge to waters of the State. Restoration shall include grading of disturbed areas to pre-project contours and revegetation with native species. Restored areas shall be monitored and maintained with native species as necessary for five years.
21. The Applicant shall submit to this Regional Board **Annual Monitoring Reports** (Annual Reports) by **January 1st** of each year for a minimum period of **five (5) years** following this issuance of 401 Certification or until project success has been achieved and documented. The Annual Reports shall describe in detail all of the project/construction activities performed during the previous year and all restoration and mitigation efforts; including percent survival by plant species and percent cover. At a minimum the Annual Reports shall include the following documentation:
 - (a) Color photo documentation of the pre- and post-project site conditions;
 - (b) Geographical Positioning System (GPS) coordinates in decimal-degrees format outlining the boundary of the project areas;
 - (c) The overall status of project including a detailed schedule of work;
 - (d) Copies of all permits revised as required in Additional Condition 1;

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- (e) Water quality monitoring results for each reach (as required) compiled in an easy to interpret format;
 - (f) A certified Statement of "no net loss" of wetlands associated with this project;
 - (g) Discussion of any monitoring activities and exotic plant control efforts; and
 - (h) A certified Statement from the permittee or his/her representative that all conditions of this Certification have been met.
22. All applications, reports, or information submitted to the Regional Board shall be signed:
- (a) For corporations, by a principal executive officer at least of the level of vice president or his duly authorized representative, if such representative is responsible for the overall operation of the facility from which discharge originates.
 - (b) For a partnership, by a general partner.
 - (c) For a sole proprietorship, by the proprietor.
 - (d) For a municipal, State, or other public facility, by either a principal executive officer, ranking elected official, or other duly authorized employee.
23. Each and any report submitted in accordance with this Certification shall contain the following completed declaration:

"I declare under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who managed the system or those directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is; to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations.

Executed on the _____ day of _____ at _____.

(Signature)
(Title)"

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24. All communications regarding this project and submitted to this Regional Board shall identify the Project File Number 11-131. Submittals shall be sent to the attention of the 401 Certification Unit.
25. Any modifications of the proposed project may require submittal of a new Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification application and appropriate filing fee.
26. The project shall comply with the local regulations associated with the Regional Board's **Municipal Stormwater Permit** issued to Ventura County and co-permittees under NPDES No. CAS004002 and Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 00-108. This includes the Stormwater Quality Urban Impact Mitigation Plan (SQUIMP) and all related implementing local ordinances and regulations for the control of stormwater pollution from new development and redevelopment. The project shall also comply with all requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) **General Permit** for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity, Order No. 99-08-DWQ. All stormwater treatment systems shall be located outside of any water of the State and shall not be used as a wetland or riparian mitigation credit.
27. Coverage under this Certification may be transferred to the extent the underlying federal permit may legally be transferred and further provided that the Applicant notifies the Executive Officer at least 30 days before the proposed transfer date, and the notice includes a written agreement between the existing and new Applicants containing a specific date of coverage, responsibility for compliance with this Certification, and liability between them.
28. The Applicant or their agents shall report any noncompliance. Any such information shall be provided verbally to the Executive Officer within 24 hours from the time the Applicant becomes aware of the circumstances. A written submission shall also be provided within five days of the time the Applicant becomes aware of the circumstances. The written submission shall contain a description of the noncompliance and its cause; the period of noncompliance, including exact dates and times, and if the noncompliance has not been corrected; the anticipated time it is expected to continue and steps taken or planned to reduce, eliminate and prevent recurrence of the noncompliance. The Executive Officer, or an authorized representative, may waive the written report on a case-by-case basis if the oral report has been received within 24 hours.
29. *Enforcement:*
 - (a) In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this Certification, the violation or threatened violation shall be subject to any remedies, penalties, process or sanctions as provided for under State law. For purposes of section 401(d) of the Clean Water Act, the applicability of any State law authorizing remedies, penalties, process or sanctions for the violation or threatened violation constitutes a

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limitation necessary to assure compliance with the water quality standards and other pertinent requirements incorporated into this Certification.

- (b) In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this Certification, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) may require the holder of any permit or license subject to this Certification to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the SWRCB deems appropriate, provided that the burden, including costs, of the reports shall be a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and the benefits to be obtained from the reports.
 - (c) In response to any violation of the conditions of this Certification, the SWRCB or RWQCB may add to or modify the conditions of this Certification as appropriate to ensure compliance.
30. This Certification shall expire five (5) years from date of this Certification. The Applicant shall submit a complete application prior to termination of this Certification if renewal is requested.