



Enforcement News

North Coast Regional Water Board Reaches \$56,404 Settlement over Sediment Discharges in Mendocino County

For release: April 11, 2014

Contact: Stormer Feiler (707) 543-7128

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board approved a settlement agreement today with a Mendocino County property owner over sediment discharges to a tributary of the Middle Main Eel River and Outlet Creek.

Working with the State Water Resources Control Board's Office of Enforcement, the Regional Water Board reached a settlement agreement with property owner Joung Min Yi, also known as Scott Yi, that requires the payment of \$56,404 in penalties for water code violations and recovery of agency staff costs for enforcement and prosecution of the case.

The sediment discharges are related to illegal construction activities, including construction and reconstruction of roads and pads on steep slopes on the Yi properties, located at 29980 and 30010 Highway 101, near Willits.

Responding to a complaint, the Environmental Crimes Task Force of Mendocino County discovered illegally constructed roads and pads on the Yi properties. The landowner, Joung Min Yi, had leased his properties to two persons for the cultivation of marijuana. The cultivators ran heavy equipment or hired people to run heavy equipment to remove mature forest, causing substantial environmental damage to the properties.

The illegal construction activities resulted in discharges of sediment to streams. The investigation concluded that the illegal construction was in violation of the California Water Code and federal Clean Water Act.

In addition to the monetary penalty, the Regional Water Board had previously issued Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R1-2011-0089 (CAO), which required the restoration and monitoring of the site to treat substantial violations of the Water Code. The CAO can be viewed [here](#).

The negotiated \$56,404 civil liability settlement of the alleged violations includes penalties for daily discharges to streams and the discharge of approximately 60 cubic yards (about 6 dump truck loads) of earthen material to a stream, as well as staff costs for the Regional and State Water Boards staff involved in the investigation and prosecution of this case. The settlement will promote better land management practices through active enforcement of environmental laws. The penalty breakdown is \$41,404 for penalties and \$15,000 staff costs.



Enforcement News

After a 30 day public comment period, Order No R1-2014-0020 was adopted today (April 11, 2014).

For more information about the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's enforcement efforts can be found [here](#):