

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Andree Greenberg)
MEETING DATE: May 8, 2013

ITEM: **5H**

SUBJECT: **Sonoma Land Trust, Sears Point Restoration Project, Sonoma County –
Issuance of Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Quality Certification**

CHRONOLOGY: The Board has not previously considered this item.

DISCUSSION: This Tentative Order (Appendix A) would issue Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Quality Certification to the Sonoma Land Trust for the Sears Point Restoration Project (Project) to restore approximately 940 acres of tidal marsh, enhance and preserve 106 acres of seasonal wetlands, maintain some agriculture uses and provide public recreation access on a 1,944-acre site south of Highway 37 along San Pablo Bay between the Petaluma River and Tolay Creek.

The Project area is bisected by the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) rail line into two parcels: a 500-acre parcel north of the SMART rail line and south of Highway 37 that will be incorporated into the San Pablo Bay Natural Wildlife Refuge; and the 960-acre parcel located south of the SMART rail line that will be restored into tidal marsh.

Polluted runoff from about a 1.32-mile stretch of Highway 37 drains toward the Project site. The runoff sheet flows off both eastbound and westbound lanes, over vegetated side slopes on both sides of Highway 37, and drains into natural ditches before it enters the Project site. Staff has worked with Caltrans to ensure it maximizes mechanical controls and limits chemical controls of the vegetated side slopes. When chemical controls are necessary for road and maintenance crews' safety, a minimum setback for chemical controls will be established.

The Project will provide a large increase in tidal marsh wetlands in the North Bay and thus follows a major recommendation of 1999's *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report* to increase tidal marsh in San Francisco Bay.

No comments were received on the Tentative Order during the public comment period, and we expect this item to remain uncontested. We have made minor editorial and formatting changes to the Tentative Order since its circulation.

RECOM-
MENDATION: Adoption of the Tentative Order

Appendix A: Tentative Order

File No. 785649 (CIWQS) (AG)