



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region



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Matthew Rodriguez
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

Mr. John Felix
City of Gardena
1717 West 162nd Street
Gardena, CA 90247-3778

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED
No. 7010 3090 0002 1021 9308

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE DRAINS REHABILITATION PROJECT (Corps' Project Non-notify), DOMINGUEZ CHANNEL, GARDENA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY (File No. 11-195)

Dear Mr. Felix:

Board staff has reviewed your request on behalf of the city of Gardena (Applicant) for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification for the above-referenced project. Your application was deemed complete on December 8, 2011.

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.

Please read this entire document carefully. 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 Valerie Carrillo, Lead, Section 401 Program, at (213) 576-6759.

Samuel Unger
Samuel Unger, P.E.
Executive Officer

March 8, 2012
Date

DISTRIBUTION LIST

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ATTACHMENT A

Project Information File No. 11-195

1. Applicant: John Felix
City of Gardena
1717 West 162nd Street
Gardena, CA 90247-3778
Phone: (310) 217-9643 Fax: (310) 217-6151
2. Applicant's Agent: Stephanie Pacheco
Tetra Tech, Inc.
301 E. Vanderbilt Way, Suite 450
San Bernardino, CA 92408
Phone: (909) 381-1674 Fax: (909) 889-1391
3. Project Name: South Vermont Avenue Drains Rehabilitation Project
4. Project Location: Gardena, Los Angeles County
- | <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|-----------------|------------------|
| E 6473341.28 | N 1776658.36 |
5. Type of Project: Drain rehabilitation project
6. Project Purpose: The purpose of the proposed project is to abandon in place two of four failed drains and rehabilitate the remaining two drains with smaller diameter drains.
7. Project Description: Recently, subsidence of several inches has been observed over the crossing of South Vermont Avenue. A geotechnical study determined that the subsidence was the result of the deterioration of the four existing 72-inch corrugated metal pipes (CMPs). The western side of the survey area, west of South Vermont Avenue, is found in the Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve that is a palustrine emergent wetland dominated by riparian habitat with an intermittent water flow from surrounding urban development.
Two of the CMPs will be abandoned in place using concrete plugs. Smaller diameter Fiberglass Reinforced Polymer Mortar (FRPM) pipes will be used to sleeve the remaining two pipes. The annular space between the smaller FRPM pipes and the CMP pipes will be filled with concrete, in place.

ATTACHMENT A

Project Information

File No. 11-195

The total temporary impact area from construction and rehabilitation of the pipes will be within 3000 square feet (0.07 acres). The project is anticipated to begin in February of 2012 and last approximately 45 days.

8. Federal Agency/Permit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
NWP No. 12 Non-notify
9. Other Required Regulatory Approvals: California Department of Fish and Game
Streambed Alteration Agreement
10. California Environmental Quality Act Compliance: The City of Gardena approved that the proposed project is Categorical Exempt from CEQA pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301 Existing Facilities.
11. Receiving Water: Dominguez Channel (Hydrologic Unit No. 405.12)
12. Designated Beneficial Uses: MUN*, REC-1, REC-2, WARM, WILD, RARE
*Conditional beneficial use
13. Impacted Waters of the United States: Non-wetland waters (streambed): 0.07 temporary acres
14. Dredge Volume: None
15. Related Projects Implemented/to be Implemented by the Applicant: The Applicant has not identified any related projects carried out in the last 5 years or planned for implementation in the next 5 years.
16. Avoidance/Minimization Activities: The Applicant has proposed to implement several Best Management Practices, including, but not limited to, the following:
- Rainfall events will be avoided by the sequencing of construction activities.
 - Erosion control and sediment control will be implemented during construction while taking local climate into consideration.
 - In case water diversion becomes necessary, the Applicant will work on the first two 72-foot Corrugated Metal Pipes (CMPs),

ATTACHMENT A

Project Information File No. 11-195

while runoff flows through two other CMPs.

- Existing vegetation will be preserved to minimize the potential from soil erosion.
- Silt fencing will be placed to detain sediment-laden water from entering the Laguna Dominguez Channel.
- Sweeping and vacuuming will remove sediment from the sidewalk and Vermont Avenue generated by construction equipment leaving the construction site or entering storm drains
- Sandbags and straw bale barriers will be placed on a level contour to intercept and pond any sheet flows allowing sediments to settle out.
- Procedures and practices will eliminate or reduce the discharge of pollutants to stormwater from vehicle and equipment cleaning operations.
- Vehicle and equipment cleaning and washing will be performed in designated, contained areas only.
- Employees and subcontractors will be trained in proper cleaning procedures.
- Vehicles and equipment used in the Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve will be pre-cleaned prior to entry into the project area.
- Vehicle and equipment fueling procedures and practices will include fueling in designate areas only, enclosing or covering stored fuel, implementing spill controls, and training employees and subcontractors in proper fueling procedures.
- Vehicles and equipment used in at the project site will be fueled at designated locations outside the project site.
- Maintenance activities will be performed at an offsite facility.

ATTACHMENT A

Project Information File No. 11-195

- Work should be performed in designated areas only.
- Covers will be used for materials stored outside.
- Leaks and spills will be checked for, and spills contained and removed immediately.
- All vehicle and equipment will be maintained in designated off-site area.
- All equipment used to transport concrete to the site will be washed in designated off-site areas.
- Concrete equipment washout shall be performed offsite in designated areas, and employee and subcontractors shall be trained.
- The Applicant will maintain the Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve (Preserve) graffiti free.
- The Applicant will assist in trimming overhanging branches outside the limit of the Preserve.
- The Applicant will assist and provide non-profit organizations access to the Willows such as the eagle scouts, bird watchers, and students.
- The Applicant will assist Friends of the Willows to dispose of non-native and debris from the Willows by providing dumpsters.
- The Applicant will remove full dumpsters and dispose of green waste as appropriate.
- The Applicant will provide staging area for the friends of the Willows during grubbing and cleaning activities.
- The Applicant will assist the Friends of the Willows in obtaining state and federal grants for the improvement and enhancement of the preserve.

ATTACHMENT A

Project Information
File No. 11-195

**17. Proposed
Compensatory
Mitigation:**

The Applicant proposes to provide additional in-kind compensation for 0.07 acres of waters of the United States to the Friends of the Willows, a non-profit volunteer organization that maintains the Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve. Maintenance activities could involve removal of non-native invasive weeds such as fennel, trash removal, and trail maintenance.

**18. Required
Compensatory
Mitigation:**

The Applicant shall provide 0.14 acres of mitigation for temporary impacts. See *Attachment B, Conditions of Certifications, Additional Conditions* for modifications and additions to the above proposed compensatory mitigation.

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification File No. 11-195

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. 16**, 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.

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification

File No. 11-195

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. Please contact the Land Disposal Unit at the Regional Board for further information regarding the disposal of solid wastes.
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

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification File No. 11-195

target species and habitat. All pesticides directed toward aquatic species must be approved 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. 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.
16. 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.

Sufficient time should be allowed to obtain any such permits (generally 180 days). If groundwater is encountered without the benefit of appropriate permits, the Applicant shall cease all activities in the areas where groundwater is present, file a Report of Waste Discharge to this Regional Board, and obtain any necessary permits prior to discharging waste.

17. All project/construction 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.
18. 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.

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification

File No. 11-195

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:

- 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.

19. The Applicant shall restore the proposed **0.07 acres** 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. The Applicant shall implement all necessary Best Management Practices to control erosion and runoff from areas associated with this project.
20. The Applicant shall provide COMPENSATORY MITIGATION to offset the proposed temporary loss of **0.07 acres** waters of the United States by creating or restoring or enhancing riparian habitat at a minimum **2:1** area replacement ratio (**0.14 acres**). The mitigation site shall be located within the Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve unless otherwise approved by this Regional Board. The Applicant shall submit a **Proposed Mitigation Report** which shall include:
 - (a) Documentation from the third party indicating that funds have been used for mitigation acreage only, which do not include administrative costs.
 - (b) The boundary of the mitigation site shall be clearly identified on a map of suitable resolution and quality and shall also be defined by latitude and longitude.
 - (c) The type(s) of mitigation shall be described (e.g., removal of exotics and/or replanting with native species, etc.)
 - (d) Success criteria shall be established.

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification File No. 11-195

This information shall be submitted to this Regional Board for approval prior to any disturbance within waters of the United States and shall include copies of all agreements made between the Applicant and a third party organization regarding compensatory mitigation efforts.

21. All open space and mitigation areas shall be placed within a conservation easement to ensure preservation in perpetuity. Documentation of proper easement placement shall be submitted to the Regional Board within one year.
22. The Applicant shall submit to this Regional Board **Annual Mitigation 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 mitigation 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. The Annual Reports shall describe the status of other agreements (e.g., mitigation banking) or any delays in the mitigation process. At a minimum the Annual Reports shall include the following documentation:
 - (e) Color photo documentation of the pre- and post-project and mitigation site conditions;
 - (f) Geographical Positioning System (GPS) coordinates in decimal-degrees format outlining the boundary of the project and mitigation areas;
 - (g) The overall status of project including a detailed schedule of work;
 - (h) Copies of all permits revised as required in Additional Condition 1;
 - (i) Water quality monitoring results for each reach (as required) compiled in an easy to interpret format;
 - (j) A certified Statement of "no net loss" of wetlands associated with this project;
 - (k) Discussion of any monitoring activities and exotic plant control efforts; and
 - (l) A certified Statement from the permittee or his/her representative that all conditions of this Certification have been met.
23. All applications, reports, or information submitted to the Regional Board shall be signed:

ATTACHMENT B

**Conditions of Certification
File No. 11-195**

- (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.

24. 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)"

- 25. All communications regarding this project and submitted to this Regional Board shall identify the Project File Number **11-195**. Submittals shall be sent to the attention of the 401 Certification Unit.
- 26. 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.
- 27. The project shall comply with the local regulations associated with the Regional Board's **Municipal Stormwater Permit** issued to Los Angeles County and co-permittees under NPDES No. CAS004001 and Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 01-182. This includes the Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) 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. 2009-009-DWQ. All

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification File No. 11-195

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.

28. 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.
29. 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.
30. *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 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.

ATTACHMENT B

Conditions of Certification

File No. 11-195

31. 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.