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COUNTY CLERK

Notice of Availability of a Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the Suction Dredge Permitting Program (SCH #2009112005)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (Draft SEIR) has been prepared by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) for the Proposed Program described below, and is available for public review. The Draft SEIR addresses the potential environmental effects that could result from implementation of this Program. CDFG invites comments on the adequacy and completeness of the environmental analyses and mitigation measures described in the Draft SEIR. Note that pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 711.4, CDFG is exempt from the environmental filing fee collected by County Clerks on behalf of CDFG.

PROJECT LOCATION: The scope of the Proposed Program is statewide. Suction dredging occurs in rivers, streams and lakes throughout the state of California where gold is present, and CDFG's draft suction dredge regulations identify areas throughout the state that would be open or closed to suction dredging. Most dredging takes place in streams draining the Sierra Nevada, Klamath Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains. Suction dredging may also occur to a lesser extent in other parts of the state. Because suction dredging may occur throughout the state, it is possible that the activity could occur in a hazardous waste site or listed toxic site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: The Proposed Program, as analyzed in this Draft SEIR, is the issuance of permits and suction dredge activities conducted in compliance with these permits, consistent with CDFG's proposed amendments to the existing regulations governing suction dredge mining in California. The environmental assessment of the Program was developed in parallel with amendments to the previous regulations governing suction dredge mining throughout California. To most accurately reflect the environmental effects of the Program, the DSEIR includes an assessment of the suction dredge activities as well as the proposed amendments to the previous regulations.

The Draft SEIR evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Program and four alternatives: a No Program Alternative (continuation of the existing moratorium); a 1994 Regulations Alternative (continuation of previous regulations in effect prior to the 2008 moratorium); a Water Quality Alternative (which would include additional Program restrictions for water bodies listed as impaired pursuant to the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) for sediment and mercury); and a Reduced Intensity Alternative (which would include greater restrictions on permit issuance and methods of operation to reduce the intensity of environmental effects).

The analysis found that significant environmental effects could occur as a result of the Proposed Program (and several of the Program alternatives), specifically in the areas of water quality and toxicology, noise, and cultural resources. However, as CDFG does not have the jurisdictional authority to mitigate impacts to these resources, such impacts have been identified as significant and unavoidable.

DFG Suction Dredge Permitting Program SEIR NOA (SCH#2005-09-2070)

PUBLIC REVIEW: The Draft SEIR and supporting documents are available on the CDFG Program website (http://www.dfg.ca.gov/suctiondredge) and upon request at 530-225-2275. Copies of the Draft SEIR are available to review at the following county libraries and CDFG offices:

- 601 Locust Street, Redding
- 1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A, Rancho Cordova
- 1807 13th Street, Suite 104, Office of Communications, Sacramento
- 7329 Silverado Trail, Napa
- 1234 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno
- 4949 Viewridge Avenue, San Diego
- 4665 Lampson Avenue, Suite J, Los Alamitos
- 3602 Inland Empire Blvd, Suite C-220, Ontario
- 20 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Suite 100, Monterey
- County libraries (please see web page listed above for list of County libraries)

PUBLIC COMMENT: Written comments should be received during the public review period which begins on February 28, 2011 and ends at 5 p.m. on April 29, 2011. Comments must be postmarked or received by April 29, 2011. Please mail, email, or hand deliver comments to CDFG at: Suction Dredge Program Draft SEIR Comments, Department of Fish and Game, 601 Locust Street, Redding, CA 96001, Written comments may also be submitted by email: dfgsuctiondredge@dfg.ca.gov (Please include the subject line: Suction Dredge Program Draft SEIR Comments) or by going to the Program website at (http://www.dfg.ca.gov/suctiondredge). All comments received including names and addresses, will become part of the official public record.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: All interested persons are encouraged to attend the public hearings to present written and/or verbal comments. Five hearings will be held at the following locations and times:

Santa Clarita: Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at 5 p.m. at the Residence Inn by Marriott, 25320 The Old Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91381

Fresno: Thursday, March 24, 2011 at 5 p.m. at the CA Retired Teachers Association, 3930 East Saginaw Way, Fresno, CA 93726

Sacramento: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 at 5 p.m. at Cal EPA Headquarters Building, Byron Sher Room, 1001 – I Street, Sacramento, CA 95812

Yreka: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at 5 p.m. at the Yreka Community Center, 810 North Oregon Street, Yreka, CA 96097

Redding: Thursday, March 31, 2011 at 5 p.m. at Shasta Senior Nutrition Program, 100 Mercy Oaks Drive, Redding, CA 96003

If you require reasonable accommodation or require this notice or the DSEIR in an alternate format, please contact the Suction Dredge Program at (530) 225-2275, or the California Relay (Telephone) Service for the deaf or hearing-impaired from TDD phones at 1-800-735-2929 or 711.