

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 13 gravel operations fall under the jurisdiction of the Humboldt County Planning Commission. The Commission must review and approve Conditional Use Permits, Surface Mining Permits, and Reclamation Plans for all gravel operations. It may also make a determination of vested rights and issue a special permit. Projects on the Eel River often require a Coastal Development Permit from the Planning Commissioner.

This Program EIR was triggered by a pending action of the Board of Supervisors involving the execution of a lease with a low bidder. The lease would have permitted the contractor to remove up to 200,000 cubic yards per year from the County owned bar at Worswick. The Board was informed by Cal Trout, Audubon Society, and the Sierra Club that execution of the lease would result in a suit being filed against the County. The suit would have contested the vested right and special permit issued December 16, 1987 and the adequacy of the original CEQA document.

The lease constitutes a project as defined in Section 21065 (a) of the CEQA. The granting of permits and approvals of reclamation plans by the Planning Commission is a project as defined in Section 21065 (c) of the CEQA.

Of the 13 projects covered in this Program EIR, five have already received a conditional use permit (CUP) or vested right, four have approved reclamation plans, and three have received coastal development permits from the county.

The total annual maximum volume of gravel that can be extracted by the five operations with CUP or vested rights equals 557,000 cubic yards. The remaining eight operations involve an additional 923,000 cubic yards per year. The total equals 1,480,000 cubic yards per year maximum.

The total potential volume removed from the Eel River basin in Humboldt County is obtained by adding the upper basin amount of 325,000 - 391,000 to 1,480,000 which equals 1,805,000 cubic yards per year up to 1,871,000 cubic yards per year. The basis of these numbers is contained in Table 1.

The objectives of the proposed gravel extraction are:

1. Provide an economic return to the operators and land owners.
2. Provide jobs.
3. Provide gravel, sand, and crushed rock for construction projects both in and outside of Humboldt County.

It is intended that the Program EIR will be used by the Federal, State, regional and local agencies having

jurisdiction in the project area. The County Planning Commission would use it as a reference document to support supplemental environmental documents containing more detail on specific project sites. The Regional Water Quality Control Board and State Water Resources Control Board could use it in their review process for potential impacts of discharges associated with these gravel removal operations. The Department of Fish & Game would use it for negotiating streambed alteration agreements. The Coastal Commission and State Lands Commission would use it to estimate impacts during their permit review process. Cal Trans, Division of Structures, can use it to determine the potential effects on highway bridges near the gravel extraction area. The Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Services and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service could use it as a reference and informational document to assist them in determining potential impacts on fish and wildlife and on the river morphology and related effects such as bank erosion and braiding of the channel. The State Division of Mines & Geology could use it to review reclamation plans for specific projects within the Lower Eel River project area. The California Department of Boating & Waterways could use it in their review of summer bridge crossings for proper signing.

A summary of the agencies having jurisdiction over the project area and the approvals and permits required is contained in Table 2.

The method of gravel removal varies with each operation. All of the operations involve skimming with a scraper (Photo No. 15) or front-end loader (Photo No. 16) with finished slopes running between two and three percent, graded towards the river channel. Some of the operations involve trenching which was implemented during the past few years at the request of the Department of Fish & Game. Trenching became the preferred method of the operator when there was no more gravel available above the three percent grade line, which is an imaginary line beginning near the edge of the low flow channel and sloping upwards away from the river. It is important that gravel extractors use the best management practices at each site in order to minimize impacts on other river resource values and it is possible that additional methods of extraction will be developed and approved in the future.

Many of the operations contain crushing plants which include jaw crushers, conveyor belts and shaking screens. This allows gravel to be crushed to different sizes and sorted into stockpiles. A typical gravel processing yard is shown in Photos No. 4 and No. 7.

Site#	COUNTY REQUIREMENTS					STATE REQUIREMENTS					FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS		
	CUP	Rec. Plan	CDP	NCUAQMD	CDP	WQ Cert. 401	SWP	DF&G	Caltrans Br. Cl.	St. Lands Commission	COE	Section 404	Section 10
1	21-91	Pending	Pending	N/A	Required	N/A	Required	91-0445	Required	Required		Required	Required
2	SP-73-87	Approved	Required	HM 43	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required		Required	Required
3	15-88	Approved	9-88	NM 050	1-90-195	Required	Required	Required	N/A	Required		Required	Required
4	Required	Required	Required	NM 056 HAC-233	Required	Required	Required	Required	N/A	Required		Required	Required
5	SP-07-88	Approved	Approved	NM 045 H-D-226	Required	Approved	Required	Approved	N/A	Required		17480N15	
6	66-89	Pending	90-89	N/A	Required	Required	Required	Required	N/A	Required		Required	Required
7	Required	Required	Required	N/A	Required	N/A	Required	91-0712	N/A	Required		Required	Required
8	47-82	Pending	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	91-0134	N/A	Required		Required	Required
9	SP-30-91	Pending	Pending	HM 040	Required	N/A	Required	91-0182	Required	Required		Required	Required
10	Required	Required	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Required	Required	N/A	Required		Required	Required
11	122-85	Approved	N/A	H-D-229	N/A	Required	Required	Required	N/A	Required		Required	Required
12	Pending	Pending	Pending	N/A	Required	Required	N/A	Required	Required	Required		Section 10	
13	Required	Required	Required	Not Known	Required	N/A	Required	Required	Required	Required		Might Be Required	

LEGEND
 CUP - Conditional Use Permit
 Rec. Plan - Reclamation Plan
 CDP - Coastal Development Permit
 NCUAQMD - North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District
 WQ Cert. 401 - Water Quality Certification
 SWP - Stormwater Permit
 DF&G - Department of Fish & Game
 Caltrans Br. Cl. - Caltrans Bridge Clearance
 St. Lands Commission - State Lands Commission
 COE - Corps of Engineers

Table 2 - Summary of Permit Status for 13 Sites



Photo #15 - View of a typical scraper used in a skimming operation.



Photo #16 - View of a front-end loader used in a skimming operation.

Some of the operations, such as those operated by Humboldt Bay Gravel at Site No. 3, Canevari Timber at Site No. 4, and Mercer-Fraser Company at Site No. 5, contain an asphalt plant. See Photo No. 6 of Mercer-Fraser's asphalt batch plant.

The operations which contain crusher plants require water to provide dust control. The water demand can reach 200 gallons per hour which equals 0.074 cubic feet per second. If seven of the larger operations on the Lower Eel River required 200 gallons per hour, this would equal 0.052 cubic feet per second which represents about 0.05 percent of the low summer flow volume in that portion of the Eel River.

A normal crusher operation will generate approximately 90 dBA at 50-feet. The asphalt plants when running generate between 75 and 80 dBA at 50-feet. Some scrapers while scraping gravel from bars may generate 70 to 75 dBA at 50-feet. The pump used to pump water for dust control for the crusher generates between 55 and 60 dBA at 50-feet. Table 3 contains information on the three sites.

TABLE 3

Site No.	Location	AP Number	Land Owner	Operator	Engineer/Agent	Volume Extracted (cu. yd.)
1	River Mile 7.5 Section 29 & 30 T2N, R1W	106-011-24	Maurice Silva 1348 Lincoln Ferndale, CA 95536 786-4276	David Truttali 1816 Ambrosini Ln. Ferndale, CA 95536 725-4784 Gene Saottini Coffee Creek Rd. Ferndale, CA 95536 725-6884	Rising Sun Enterprises 1864 Myrtle Avenue Eureka, CA 95501 445-2433	10,000
2	River Mile 9 Section 28 T3N, R1W	200-321-11	Humboldt County Public Works 1106 Second Street Eureka, CA 95501 445-7741			200,000
3	River Mile 10.5 Section 33 T3N, R1W	200-331-02 200-332-06 200-341-06	George Beach 2029 Greenfield Dr. El Cajon, CA 92021	Humboldt Bay Gravel P.O. Box 566 Rio Dell, CA 95562 764-5615	A.M. Baird 1100 Main Fortuna, CA 95540 725-5182	250,000
4	River Mile 11.3 Section 34 T3N, R1W	200-341-02, 04, 05	Robert Canevari P.O. Box 686 Fortuna, CA 95540 725-5114	Jim D. Cook Canevari Timber Co. P.O. Box 686 Fortuna, CA 95540 725-5114	Rising Sun Enterprises 1864 Myrtle Avenue Eureka, CA 95501 445-2433	200,000
5	River Mile 11.8 Section 2, 3, 4 T2N, R1W	200-352-03 200-353-02, 11 106-041-09	Albert Pedrazzini P.O. Box 548 Lola, CA 95551	Mercer-Fraser Company P.O. Box 1006 Eureka, CA 95502 443-6371	Rising Sun Enterprises 1864 Myrtle Avenue Eureka, CA 95501 445-2433	70,000
6	River Mile 12.3 Section 2, 3, 10, 11 T2N, R1W	106-091-30, 40, 44 200-362-05	Fortuna Sand & Gravel Elbert A. Land 7802 Lake Shore Dr. Roseville, CA 95661 (916) 791-3361	Same as Land Owner	Rising Sun Enterprises 1864 Myrtle Avenue Eureka, CA 95501 445-2433	200,000
7	River Mile 13.1 Section 11 T2N, R1W	201-191-08	Ed Tanferani 1603 Sandy Prairie Rd. Alton, CA 95540 725-2619	Dick Ehrhardt Ehrhardt Plumbing 3433 Newburg Road Fortuna, CA 95540 725-2041		5,000
8	River Mile 13.7 Section 14 T2N, R1W	201-211-03	Charles Hansen 2404 Sandy Prairie Rd. Fortuna, CA 95540 725-2774	Same as Land Owner		75,000

Site No.	Location	AP Number	Land Owner	Operator	Engineer/Agent	Volume Extracted (cu. vd.)
9	River Mile 14.3 Section 14 & 23 T2N, R1W	106-221-01 201-221-09 201-261-01, 06	Roger & Susan Hauck 1909 Fowler Lane Fortuna, CA 95540	Eureka Sand & Gravel P.O. Box 3568 Eureka, CA 95502 443-2791	Pacific Affiliates, Inc. 835 Third Street Eureka, CA 95501 445-3001	150,000
10	River Mile 5 Section 27, 28, 29 T2N, R1E	204-063-01, 02, 04 204-071-04 204-072-06 204-101-23 204-111-07 206-351-02	Jack R. Noble P.O. Box 308 Carlotta, CA 95528 768-3739	Same as Land Owner		40,000
11	River Mile 6 Section 27 T2N, R1E	204-072-03	Thomas R. Bess P.O. Box 6 Carlotta, CA 95528	Same as Land Owner		20,000
12	River Mile 7 Section 29 & 30 T3N, R1W	106-011-08, 11, 23, and 24 106-031-01 309-271-01, 02	Ray Tedsen Tony Rocha Pat O'Dell, TR Ed Nielsen	Arcata Ready Mix	Bill Davis	150,000
13	River Mile 14.5 Section 23	See Supplemental EIR	Roger Hauck	Mercer-Fraser	Bob Brown Rising Sun Enterprises	100,000