

**EXHIBIT “B”**  
**CHAPTER 11 OF THE SONOMA COUNTY CODE**

**CHAPTER 11 – CONSTRUCTION GRADING AND DRAINAGE**

**Article 02. General.**

**Sec. 11.02.010. - Title.**

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Sonoma County Construction Grading and Drainage Regulations. This chapter may also be referred to and cited as the Sonoma County Construction Grading and Drainage Ordinance.

**Sec. 11.02.020. - Purpose.**

This chapter is enacted for the purpose of regulating construction grading and drainage in the unincorporated area of the county, and to establish ministerial standards for those activities that:

- A. Protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the county;
- B. Minimize hazards to life and property;
- C. Protect against soil loss, and the pollution of watercourses with soil and other pollutants;
- D. Protect the safety, use, and stability of public rights-of-way and watercourses;
- E. Protect watercourses from obstruction, and protect life and property from the deleterious effects of flooding;
- F. Protect aquatic resources and wildlife habitat; and
- G. Promote water conservation and groundwater recharge.

**Sec. 11.02.030. - Administration.**

This chapter shall be administered under the direction of the board of supervisors, by and through the director.

**Sec. 11.02.040. Applicability.**

- A. Compliance required. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all construction grading and drainage occurring in the unincorporated area of the county, except for construction grading and drainage for timber operations conducted under an approved timber harvesting plan or nonindustrial timber management plan. The permit requirements in this chapter shall apply to all construction grading and drainage subject to the provisions of this chapter, unless exempted from permit requirements by Section

11.04.010.C or 11.06.010.C. The standards in Article 14 and the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage shall apply to all construction grading and drainage subject to the provisions of this chapter, regardless of whether a permit is required by this chapter.

- B. **Liability.** Nothing in this chapter, nor the issuance of a permit pursuant to this chapter, nor compliance with the provisions of this chapter or with any permit conditions, shall relieve any person from responsibility for damage to other persons or property, or impose any liability upon the county, its officers, agents, or employees, for damage to other persons or property.
- C. **Relationship to other laws.** The provisions of this chapter are not intended to and shall not be construed or given effect in a manner that conflicts with state or federal law, or interferes with the achievement of state or federal regulatory objectives. The provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted to be supplementary to and compatible with state and federal enactments, and in furtherance of the public purposes those enactments express. Compliance with the provisions of this chapter, however, does not ensure compliance with state and federal requirements. Further, the provisions of this chapter are not intended to and shall not be construed or given effect in a manner that supersedes other provisions of this code. Where another provision of this code establishes a stricter requirement than a provision of this chapter, that stricter requirement shall prevail.
- D. **Other permits.** Nothing in this chapter shall eliminate the need for any person undertaking any construction grading or drainage from having to obtain any other permits, approvals, or authorizations required by this code or state or federal agencies.

#### **Sec. 11.02.050. - Interpretations.**

- A. **Authority to interpret.** The director shall have the authority to interpret the provisions of this chapter. Whenever the director determines that the meaning or applicability of any requirement of this chapter is subject to interpretation, the director may issue an official written interpretation. The director may also refer any issue of interpretation to the board of supervisors for determination.
- B. **Language.** When used in this chapter, the words "shall," "must," "will," "is to," and "are to" are always mandatory. "Should" is not mandatory but is strongly recommended; and "may" is permissive. The present tense includes the past and future tenses; and the future tense includes the present. The singular number includes the plural number, and the plural the singular, unless the natural construction of the word indicates otherwise. The words "include," "includes," and "including" shall mean "including but not limited to."
- C. **Time limits.** Whenever a number of days is specified in this chapter, or in any permit, condition of approval, or notice provided in compliance with this chapter, the number of days shall be construed as calendar days, unless business days are specified. A time limit shall extend to 5 p.m. on the following business day where the last of the specified

number of days falls on a weekend, county-observed holiday, or other day the county is not open for business.

- D. State or federal law requirements. Where this chapter references applicable provisions of state or federal law, the reference shall be construed to be to the applicable state or federal law provisions as they may be amended from time to time.

#### **Sec. 11.02.060 – Best Management Practices.**

The director may adopt, amend, or rescind best management practices to implement or make specific the standards in Article 14. The best management practices shall reference or detail only fixed standards and objective measurements that do not require the exercise of discretion by the director. Failure by any person to comply with any applicable best management practice adopted or amended pursuant to this section shall be a violation of this chapter. The best management practices adopted or amended pursuant to this section shall be compiled by the director and made available to the public.

#### **Sec. 11.02.070 – Legislative Intent.**

- A. Ministerial provisions; exception. It is the intent of the board of supervisors that the provisions of this chapter and the best management practices adopted pursuant to Section 11.02.060 shall be ministerial within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act and the State CEQA Guidelines. It is the further intent of the board of supervisors that the review of permit applications and the issuance of permits pursuant to this chapter shall be ministerial acts, except in the case of discretionary permit applications.
- B. Interpretation and application. This chapter and the best management practices adopted pursuant to Section 11.02.060 shall be interpreted, administered, and construed in light of the legislative intent expressed in Subsection A. If any provisions, sentences, or words in this chapter or any best management practice adopted pursuant Section 11.02.060 are ambiguous or capable of more than one interpretation, staff shall interpret, administer, and construe them as conferring only ministerial authority. Staff shall not exercise personal judgment, special discretion or judgment, or personal, subjective judgment in deciding whether or how projects should be carried out, except in the case of discretionary permit applications.

#### **Article 04. – Construction Grading Permits.**

##### **Sec. 11.04.010. - Permit Requirements.**

- A. Permit required. A construction grading permit shall be required prior to commencing any construction grading or related work, including preparatory land clearing, vegetation removal, or other ground disturbance, except where exempted from permit requirements by Subsection C. A separate construction grading permit shall be required for each site.

B. Designation and performance. Construction grading shall be designated “regular construction grading” or “engineered construction grading” in compliance with Table 11-1, and shall be performed as follows:

1. Regular construction grading. Regular construction grading shall be performed in compliance with approved plans and specifications prepared by the property owner, an authorized agent of the property owner, or a licensed professional acting within the scope of their license.
2. Engineered construction grading. Engineered construction grading shall be performed in compliance with approved plans and specifications prepared by a civil engineer.

**Table 11-1 Construction Grading Designation**

Parameter	Threshold	
	Regular Construction Grading	Engineered Construction Grading
Volume (cut or fill)	Does not exceed 5,000 cubic yards	Exceeds 5,000 cubic yards
Cut	No greater than 3 feet in depth and does not create a cut slope greater than 5 feet in height <sup>1</sup>	Greater than 3 feet in depth or creates a cut slope greater than 5 feet in height <sup>1</sup>
Fill	No greater than 3 feet in depth <sup>1</sup>	Greater than 3 feet in depth <sup>1</sup>
Fill inside the flood-prone urban area or special flood hazard areas	Does not exceed 50 cubic yards	Exceeds 50 cubic yards
Existing slope of grading area	No greater than 15 percent	Greater than 15 percent
Geologic Hazard Area Combining District designated in the zoning code	Grading area is not in a Geologic Hazard Area Combining District	Grading area is wholly or partially in a Geologic Hazard Area Combining District <sup>2</sup>
Geologic hazards	Grading area contains no geologic hazards	Grading area contains geologic hazards <sup>3</sup>

Notes:

1. The references to depths and heights for cuts and fills are between existing grade and proposed grade.

2. The engineered construction grading designation shall apply only to the portion of the grading area in the Geologic Hazard Area Combining District.
  3. The engineered construction grading designation shall apply only to the portion of the grading area that is directly affected by the geologic hazards.
- C. Exemptions from permit requirements. The following construction grading activities are exempt from the provisions of this section and may be conducted without obtaining a construction grading permit, provided that these activities shall still be subject to the standards in Article 14 and the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage.
1. Cemeteries. Routine excavations and fills for graves.
  2. Construction grading within a public right-of-way. Construction grading within a public right-of-way where authorized by a valid encroachment permit.
  3. Emergency construction grading. Construction grading necessary to protect life or property, or to implement erosion prevention or control measures, where a situation exists that requires immediate action. Only the work necessary to abate an imminent hazard may be performed prior to obtaining a construction grading permit. The person performing the emergency work or the property owner or easement holder shall notify the director and provide evidence acceptable to the director of the scope and necessity of the work on or before the next business day after the onset of the emergency situation. The property owner or easement holder, an authorized agent of the property owner or easement holder, or other person with the written consent of the property owner or easement holder shall apply for a construction grading permit within ten days after the commencement of the emergency work. The director may order work to be stopped or restricted in scope based upon the nature of the emergency.
  4. Environmental remediation. Construction grading for environmental remediation ordered or approved by a public agency exercising regulatory jurisdiction over a site contaminated with hazardous materials where the ground surface is restored to its previous topographic condition within 60 days after the completion of the work. The director shall be notified in writing at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the work.
  5. Excavations and fills for basements and footings. Excavations below existing or finished grade for basements and footings of buildings, retaining walls, or other structures, and fills using only material from the excavation, where authorized by a valid building, agricultural exemption, or demolition permit. The placement of fill must be shown on the approved plans and specifications. Fill that is intended to support structures or surcharges may be greater than 1 foot in depth only if a soils report justifies the use of the fill. This exemption shall not apply to any fill that is engineered construction grading.

6. Excavations and fills for wells or on-site sewage disposal systems. Excavations and fills for wells or on-site sewage disposal systems where authorized by a valid well or septic permit. The placement of fill must be shown on the approved plans and specifications.
7. Existing ponds and reservoirs. Maintenance or restoration of existing lawfully constructed ponds and reservoirs where the original dimensions and design capacity are not increased, and the structural integrity is not compromised.
8. Existing private roads and driveways. Maintenance, repair, or resurfacing of existing lawfully constructed private roads and driveways where the original dimensions and design capacity are not increased, and the structural integrity is not compromised. This exemption shall not apply to any fill in the flood-prone urban area or any special flood hazard area.
9. Exploratory excavations. Exploratory excavations to investigate subsurface conditions, affecting or disturbing an area of less than 10,000 square feet and involving the movement of less than 50 cubic yards, under the direction of a civil engineer, soils engineer, geotechnical engineer, professional geologist, or registered environmental health specialist where the ground surface is restored to its previous topographic condition within 60 days after the completion of the work.
10. Landfills. Construction grading at landfills regulated by the State Integrated Waste Management Act.
11. Minor cut. A cut that does not exceed 50 cubic yards, and:
  - a. Is no greater than 3 feet in depth; or
  - b. Does not create a cut slope greater than 5 feet in height and greater than 2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (50 percent).
12. Minor fill inside the flood-prone urban area or special flood hazard areas. A fill inside the flood-prone urban area or any special flood hazard area that does not exceed 50 cubic yards or alter or obstruct a watercourse or wetland, is no greater than 1 foot in depth, replaces material excavated from the site, and does not exceed the elevation of the immediately adjacent grade where authorized by a valid building, agricultural exemption, encroachment, or demolition permit. The placement of fill must be shown on the approved plans and specifications. This exemption shall not apply to any fill that is engineered construction grading.
13. Minor fill outside the flood-prone urban area and special flood hazard areas. A fill outside the flood-prone urban area and any special flood hazard area that does not exceed 50 cubic yards or alter or obstruct a watercourse or wetland, and is:

- a. No greater than 1 foot in depth, placed on terrain with an existing slope no greater than 15 percent, and intended to support structures or surcharges; or
- b. No greater than 3 feet in depth and not intended to support structures or surcharges.

This exemption shall not apply to any fill that is engineered construction grading.

- 14. Pipelines and utilities. Excavations and fills for pipelines, routine pipeline maintenance practices, or installation, testing, maintenance, or replacement of utility connections, distribution or transmission systems, or telecommunication facilities, on a single site or within a public right-of-way where the ground surface is restored to its previous topographic condition within 60 days after the completion of the work. This exemption shall not apply to any fill that is used for any purpose other than restoring the ground surface to its previous topographic condition.
- 15. Public projects. Construction grading for public projects on public property where a public agency takes full responsibility for the work.
- 16. Public trails. Construction grading for public trails where a public agency takes full responsibility for the work. The director shall be notified in writing at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the work.
- 17. Resource conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects. Construction grading for soil, water, wildlife, or other resource conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects where a public agency takes full responsibility for the work. The director shall be notified in writing at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the work.
- 18. Soil profiling test pits. Excavations for soil profiling test pits where the ground surface is restored to its previous topographic condition within 60 days after the completion of the work.
- 19. Surface mining. Mining, quarrying, excavating, processing, or stockpiling rock, sand, gravel, aggregate, or clay in compliance with Chapter 26A of this code.

## **Article 06. - Construction Drainage Permits.**

### **Sec. 11.06.010. - Permit Requirements.**

- A. Permit required. A construction drainage permit shall be required prior to commencing any construction drainage involving construction or modification of drainage facilities or related work, including preparatory land clearing, vegetation removal, or other ground

disturbance, except where exempted from permit requirements by Subsection C. A separate construction drainage permit shall be required for each site.

B. Designation and performance. Construction drainage involving construction or modification of drainage facilities shall be designated “regular construction drainage” or “engineered construction drainage” in compliance with Table 11-2, and shall be performed as follows:

1. Regular construction drainage. Regular construction drainage shall be performed in compliance with approved plans and specifications prepared by the property owner, an authorized agent of the property owner, or a licensed professional acting within the scope of their license.
2. Engineered construction drainage. Engineered construction drainage shall be performed in compliance with approved plans and specifications prepared by a civil engineer.

**Table 11-2 Construction Drainage Designation**

Parameter	Threshold <sup>1</sup>	
	Regular Construction Drainage	Engineered Construction Drainage
Cross-sectional area of drainage facility	Does not exceed 2 square feet	Exceeds 2 square feet

Notes:

1. Examples:

- a. Circular: Diameter is less than or equal to 19 inches or 1.6 feet, effectively 18 inches or 1.5 feet.
- b. Vee-ditch: Depth of 1 foot and top width equal to 4 feet (assumes 2:1 side slopes).

C. Exemptions from permit requirements. The following construction drainage activities are exempt from the provisions of this section and may be conducted without obtaining a construction drainage permit, provided that these activities shall still be subject to the standards in Article 14 and the department’s best management practices for construction grading and drainage.

1. Drainage facilities for construction grading, buildings or structures, septic systems, or within a public right-of-way. Construction or modification of drainage facilities for construction grading, buildings or structures, septic systems, or within a public right-of-way where authorized by a valid construction grading, building, septic, or encroachment permit.



2. Emergency construction drainage. Construction or modification of drainage facilities necessary to protect life or property, or to implement erosion prevention or control measures, where a situation exists that requires immediate action. Only the work necessary to abate an imminent hazard may be performed prior to obtaining a construction drainage permit. The person performing the emergency work or the property owner or easement holder shall notify the director and provide evidence acceptable to the director of the scope and necessity of the work on or before the next business day after the onset of the emergency situation. The property owner or easement holder, an authorized agent of the property owner or easement holder, or other person with the written consent of the property owner or easement holder shall apply for a construction drainage permit within ten days after the commencement of the emergency work. The director may order work to be stopped or restricted in scope based upon the nature of the emergency.
3. Existing private drainage facilities. Maintenance, repair, or replacement of existing, lawfully constructed private drainage facilities where the location and design capacity are not changed.
4. Minor pipe and vee-ditch swale systems. Construction or modification of pipe and vee-ditch swale systems that meet all of the following criteria:
  - a. The drainage area is less than one-half acre for a smooth-walled pipe or vee-ditch swale system, or less than one-quarter acre for a corrugated pipe system.
  - b. The pipe or vee-ditch swale system is not in the flood-prone urban area.
  - c. The pipe system is a single run, with a minimum diameter of 8 inches and installed slopes between 2 percent and 4 percent, or the vee-ditch swale system is made of earth, grass, or rock, with side slopes no greater than 2 units horizontal to 1 unit vertical (50 percent), maximum depth of 9 inches, and installed slopes between 2 percent and 4 percent.
5. Public projects. Construction or modification of drainage facilities for public projects on public property where a public agency takes full responsibility for the work.
6. Public trails. Construction or modification of drainage facilities for public trails where a public agency takes full responsibility for the work. The director shall be notified in writing at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the work.
7. Resource conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects. Construction or modification of drainage facilities for soil, water, wildlife, or other resource conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects where a public agency takes full responsibility for the work. The director shall be notified in writing at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the work.

## **Article 08. - Permit Application Filing and Processing.**

### **Sec. 11.08.010. – Purpose.**

This article provides procedures and requirements for the preparation, filing, and initial processing of the permit applications required by this chapter.

### **Sec. 11.08.020. - Authority for Permit Decisions.**

The director shall be responsible for reviewing and making decisions on each type of permit application required by this chapter.

### **Sec. 11.08.030. - Permit Application Preparation and Filing.**

- A. Pre-application contact. A prospective applicant is encouraged to contact the director before completing and filing a permit application to determine the information and materials required for application filing. The provision of information by the director shall not be construed as a recommendation for either approval or disapproval of an application. Any failure by the director to identify all required information and materials shall not constitute a waiver of those requirements.
- B. Permit application contents. Permit applications shall be filed with the department on a county application form. Each permit application shall include all required fees and deposits, all plans and specifications, maps, reports, and other information and materials required by the department's list of required application contents for the specific type of application, and any other plans and specifications, maps, reports, and other information and materials the director deems necessary to verify compliance with this chapter.
- C. Eligibility for filing or withdrawing. A permit application may only be filed or withdrawn by the property owner or an easement holder, an authorized agent of the property owner or easement holder, or other person with the written consent of the property owner or easement holder.
- D. Request for relief from standards. A permit application may include a request for relief from the standards in Article 14. The request shall state in writing each standard proposed to be varied, the proposed substitute measure, when it would apply, and its advantages. The director may require additional information to evaluate the requested relief.

### **Sec. 11.08.040. - Application Fees.**

- A. Fee schedule. The board of supervisors shall establish a schedule of fees for the processing of permit applications required by this chapter.
- B. Refunds and withdrawals. The required application fees cover county costs for staff time and the other activities involved in processing permit applications. Therefore, no refund

due to disapproval or expiration shall be allowed. In the case of a withdrawal, the director may refund up to 90 percent of the application fee prior to the commencement of plan review.

**Sec. 11.08.050. - Indemnification.**

- A. Applicant agreement. At the time of submitting a discretionary permit application, the applicant shall agree, as part of the permit application, to defend (with legal counsel of the county's selection), indemnify, and hold harmless the county and its agents, officers, attorneys, and employees, from any claim, action, or proceeding brought against the county or its agents, officers, attorneys, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul, an approval of the county concerning the permit application, which action is brought within the applicable statute of limitations. The required indemnification shall include damages awarded against the county, if any, costs of suit, attorneys' fees, and other costs and expenses incurred in connection with the action.
- B. County notification of applicant. In the event that a claim, action, or proceeding referred to in Subsection A is brought, the county shall promptly notify the applicant of the existence of the claim, action, or proceeding and shall cooperate fully in the defense of the claim, action, or proceeding.

**Sec. 11.08.060. - Initial Permit Application Review.**

The director shall review each permit application for completeness and accuracy before it is accepted as complete and officially filed. The director's determination of completeness shall be based on the department's list of required application contents and any additional instructions provided to the applicant in any pre-application contact, and/or during the initial review period. No permit application shall be deemed complete, and processing shall not commence on any permit application, until all required fees and deposits have been paid, and all required plans and specifications, maps, reports, and other information and materials have been submitted to the director and reviewed to determine compliance with this chapter, including peer review where necessary to determine compliance with this chapter.

- A. Notification of applicant when permit application is incomplete. The director shall inform the applicant in writing within 30 days of filing when a permit application is incomplete. The letter shall specify the additional information required to make the permit application complete.
- B. Withdrawal of application. If an applicant fails to provide the additional information specified in the director's letter providing notice of an incomplete permit application within 120 days following the date of the letter, the permit application shall be deemed withdrawn without any further action by the director. The director may grant one 90-day extension, if the applicant files a written request with the director before expiration of the original 120-day period. After the withdrawal of a permit application, future consideration by the director shall require the submittal of a new permit application and associated fees.

#### **Sec. 11.08.070. - Environmental Review.**

After a permit application has been accepted as complete, if the permit application is a discretionary permit application, the proposed activity shall be reviewed as required by the California Environmental Quality Act and the State CEQA Guidelines to determine the level of environmental processing required.

#### **Sec. 11.08.080. - Expiration of Permit Application.**

If a permit is not issued within one year following the filing of a permit application, the permit application shall expire and be deemed withdrawn, without any further action by the director. The director may grant one 180-day extension, if the applicant files a written request with the director before expiration of the original one-year period and shows that the extension is warranted due to a lawsuit, staff error, or other circumstances beyond the control of the applicant. After the expiration of a permit application, future consideration by the director shall require submittal of a new permit application and associated fees. Where a new permit application is filed within 180 days following the expiration of the original permit application, the applicant may resubmit the original plans and specifications and the new permit application shall be processed based on the provisions of this chapter in effect at the time the expired permit application was initially submitted. No expired permit application shall be renewed in this fashion more than once.

### **Article 10. - Permit Review Procedures.**

#### **Sec. 11.10.010. – Purpose.**

This article provides procedures for the final review and approval or disapproval of the permit applications required by this chapter.

#### **Sec. 11.10.020. - Permit Approval and Issuance.**

The approval of a permit application and issuance of a construction grading or drainage permit by the director shall occur as follows:

- A. Criteria for approval. The director may approve a permit application and issue a construction grading or drainage permit when the following requirements are satisfied:
  1. Ministerial permit application. A ministerial permit application shall be approved and a ministerial construction grading or drainage permit issued when the director determines that the proposed construction grading or drainage complies with all applicable requirements of this chapter, all other applicable requirements of this code, and the requirements of any applicable county land use approvals.
  2. Discretionary permit application. A discretionary permit application may be approved and a discretionary construction grading or drainage permit issued when the director determines that:

- a. There are special circumstances or conditions affecting the site that make the strict application of the standards in Article 14 impractical;
  - b. The requested relief from the standards in Article 14 is consistent with the purpose of this chapter and does not diminish the health, safety, and environmental protection benefits that would be obtained from the strict application of the standards in Article 14;
  - c. The proposed construction grading or drainage complies with all applicable requirements of this chapter, except for those modified by the permit, all other applicable requirements of this code, and the requirements of any applicable county land use approvals.
- B. Permit conditions. In approving a discretionary permit application, the director may impose any conditions deemed reasonable and necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; prevent adverse environmental impacts or the creation of hazards to property; and ensure proper completion of the work.
- C. Permit holder. A construction grading or drainage permit shall be issued to the property owner or an easement holder.
- D. Effect of permit and approved plans and specifications.
  - 1. Compliance with plans and specifications required. All work for which a construction grading or drainage permit is issued shall be done in compliance with the approved plans and specifications and the recommendations of required reports. The approved plans and specifications shall not be changed without the written approval of the director.
  - 2. Modifications. Proposed modifications to the approved plans and specifications shall be submitted to the director in writing, together with all necessary technical information and design details. A proposed modification shall be approved only if the director determines that the modification complies with all applicable requirements of this chapter, all other applicable requirements of this code, and the requirements of any applicable county land use approvals.
- E. Distribution and use of approved plans and specifications. The director shall retain one or more sets of approved and dated plans and specifications for inspection and record keeping. Two sets of approved and dated plans and specifications shall be provided to the permittee. The permittee shall maintain one set of approved and dated plans and specifications and the permit on the site at all times during the work.

## **Article 12. - Permit Implementation, Time Limits, and Extensions.**

### **Sec. 11.12.010. – Purpose.**

This article provides requirements for the implementation of the permits required by this chapter, including time limits and procedures for granting extensions of time.

**Sec. 11.12.020. - Effective Date of Permit.**

- A. Ministerial permit. A ministerial construction grading or drainage permit shall become effective on the date of ministerial permit application approval.
- B. Discretionary permit. A discretionary construction grading or drainage permit shall become effective on the 11th day following the date of discretionary permit application approval, provided that no appeal has been filed or direct review requested in compliance with Article 16.

**Sec. 11.12.030. - Time limits and Extensions.**

- A. Time limits.
  - 1. Construction grading permits. Construction grading permits shall expire three years from the effective date of the permit, unless an extension has been granted in writing in compliance with Subsection B, provided that the director may limit a construction grading permit to a lesser time period where the permit is required to abate dangerous or hazardous conditions. All work for which a construction grading permit is issued shall be completed and finalized prior to expiration of the permit or any extension granted pursuant to Subsection B.
  - 2. Construction drainage permits. Construction drainage permits shall expire three years from the effective date of the permit, unless an extension has been granted in writing in compliance with Subsection B, provided that the director may limit a construction drainage permit to a lesser time period where the permit is required to abate dangerous or hazardous conditions. All work for which a construction drainage permit is issued shall be completed and finalized prior to expiration of the permit or any extension granted pursuant to Subsection B.
- B. Extensions. Any permittee holding an unexpired construction grading or drainage permit may apply for an extension of the time within which the work for which the permit is issued must be completed and finalized. The director may extend the expiration date of the permit for a period not exceeding 180 days per extension request where the permittee has requested the extension in writing prior to the expiration of the permit or extension and shown that a lawsuit, staff error, or other circumstances beyond the control of the permittee have prevented the work for which the permit is issued from being started or completed.
- C. Tolling. Any permittee holding an unexpired construction grading or drainage permit may request a tolling of the time within which the work for which the permit is issued must be completed and finalized where a lawsuit is brought in a court of competent jurisdiction involving the approval of the permit. Upon receipt of a request, the director

shall grant a stay for the period during which the litigation is pending, subject to the following limitations:

1. The stay may not be granted until the county is served with the initial petition or complaint. If the county is not a party to the litigation, the county must be served with a courtesy copy of the initial pleading.
  2. The stay may only be granted where the litigation is brought by opponents of the work to attack or overturn the approval.
- D. Effect of expiration. After the expiration of a construction grading or drainage permit, no further work shall be done on the site until a new permit is obtained. The new permit shall be subject to the following requirements:
1. A new permit issued to recommence work started under an expired permit shall be based on the provisions of this chapter in effect at the time the original expired permit was issued.
  2. A new permit issued to commence work under an expired permit shall be based on the provisions of this chapter in effect at the time the original expired permit was issued if the new permit application is submitted within six years following the issuance of the original expired permit.
  3. A new permit issued to commence work under an expired permit shall be based on the provisions of this chapter in effect at the time the new permit application is submitted if the new permit application is submitted more than six years following the issuance of the original expired permit.

#### **Sec. 11.12.040. - Performance of Work.**

All work for which a construction grading or drainage permit is required shall be subject to the following requirements.

- A. Pre-construction consultation. The permittee and the director shall have a pre-construction consultation prior to the commencement of the work.
- B. Responsibility for the work. The permittee shall be responsible for ensuring that the work is performed in compliance with the approved plans and specifications.
- C. Notification of change in ownership. The permittee shall notify the director of any change in ownership of the site prior to completion of the work.
- D. Inspection. The work shall be subject to inspection as required by the director to ensure compliance with the approved plans and specifications. Approval as a result of an inspection shall not be construed to be an approval of a violation of the provisions of this chapter or other provisions of this code. Inspections presuming to give authority to

violate or cancel the provisions of this chapter or other provisions of this code shall not be valid.

1. Site access. The permittee shall provide adequate access to the site for inspection by inspectors designated by the director during the performance of all work and for a minimum of one year after final inspection.
  2. Special inspections and certifications. The director may require special inspections and certifications to verify proper completion of the work.
    - a. Type of inspections and certifications. Special inspections and certifications may include requiring: the permittee to provide a civil engineer, soils engineer, geotechnical engineer, professional biologist, professional forester, professional geologist, and/or other consultants to perform inspections of work in progress and to certify the proper completion of work; inspection and testing by an approved testing agency; or the submittal of periodic progress reports.
    - b. Notification of noncompliance. Where the use of a civil engineer, soils engineer, geotechnical engineer, professional biologist, professional forester, professional geologist, or other consultant is required, these personnel shall immediately report in writing to the director and the permittee any instance of work not being done in compliance with this chapter, other applicable provisions of this code, the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage, or the approved plans and specifications, and shall also provide recommendations for corrective measures, if determined by the consultant to be necessary.
    - c. Transfer of responsibility for approval. If a required civil engineer, soils engineer, geotechnical engineer, professional biologist, professional forester, professional geologist, or other consultant is changed during the course of the work, the work shall be stopped until the permittee notifies the director in writing of the change and the new consultant notifies the director in writing of their agreement to accept responsibility for approval of the completed work within the area of their technical competence.
- E. Field changes. After permit issuance, no change to the approved work shall occur without the prior written approval of the director. If the director determines that the changes are minor, the changes shall be shown on as-built plans. If the director determines that the changes are significant, a request for a modification to the approved plans and specifications shall be filed as provided in Section 11.10.020.D.2.
- F. Protection of utilities. As required by Government Code section 4216.2, the permittee shall contact the Underground Service Alert (USA) prior to starting any excavation that will be conducted in an area that is known, or reasonably should be known, to contain



subsurface utility installations. Contact shall occur at least two working days, but not more than fourteen calendar days, before the excavation starts. If practical, the excavator shall delineate with white paint or other suitable markings the area to be excavated.

- G. Stop work orders. The director may order that any work performed contrary to the requirements of this chapter, other applicable provisions of this code, the approved plans and specifications, or any permit conditions, or any work that has otherwise become hazardous to property or the public, be immediately stopped. It shall be unlawful and a violation of this chapter for any person to resume work that was ordered to be stopped by the director, unless the director has required and the permittee has agreed to any necessary corrective measures, and the director has authorized resumption of the work in writing. A violation of a stop work order shall be punishable in compliance with Section 11.20.070.B.

#### **Sec. 11.12.050. - Completion of Work.**

- A. Final reports. Upon final completion of all work for which a construction grading or drainage permit is required, the director may require the following plans and reports, supplements thereto, or other documentation, prepared by the appropriate professionals in the format required by the director. The director may also require such plans and reports at other stages of the work.
1. As-built plans. A set of as-built plans including original and finished contours at intervals acceptable to the director, parcel drainage patterns with directional arrows, locations and elevations of all surface and subsurface drainage facilities, and locations of all post-development stormwater best management practices.
  2. Testing records. A complete record of all field and laboratory tests, including the location and elevation of all field tests.
  3. Professional opinions. Professional opinions regarding slope stability, soil bearing capacity, and any other information pertinent to the adequacy of the site for its intended use.
  4. Declarations about completed work. Declarations by any civil engineer, soils engineer, geotechnical engineer, professional biologist, professional forester, professional geologist, or other consultant required by the director pursuant to Section 11.12.040.D.2, that all work was done in compliance with the approved plans and specifications and the recommendations of required reports.
- B. Final inspection. No permittee shall be deemed to have complied with the provisions of this chapter until a final inspection of the work has been completed and approved by the director. The permittee shall notify the director when the work is ready for final inspection. Final approval shall not be given until all work has been completed in compliance with the approved plans and specifications, and all reports required by Subsection A have been submitted and accepted.

## **Article 14. - Standards.**

### **Sec. 11.14.010. - Purpose.**

This article provides ministerial standards for the proper conduct of construction grading and drainage. All construction grading and drainage subject to the provisions of this chapter shall comply with the requirements of this article, regardless of whether a permit is required by this chapter.

### **Sec. 11.14.020. - Construction Grading.**

Construction grading shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the following requirements.

#### **A. General.**

1. Areas of construction grading. Construction grading shall be limited to the grading area identified and delineated on the approved plans and specifications.
2. Final contours. Contours, elevations, and shapes of finished surfaces shall be blended with adjacent natural terrain to achieve a consistent grade and natural appearance. Borders of cut slopes and fills shall be rounded off to a minimum radius of 5 feet to blend with the natural terrain.
3. MS4 permit. Where construction grading is within an MS4 permit boundary, the construction grading shall comply with the applicable standards and provisions of the MS4 permit.

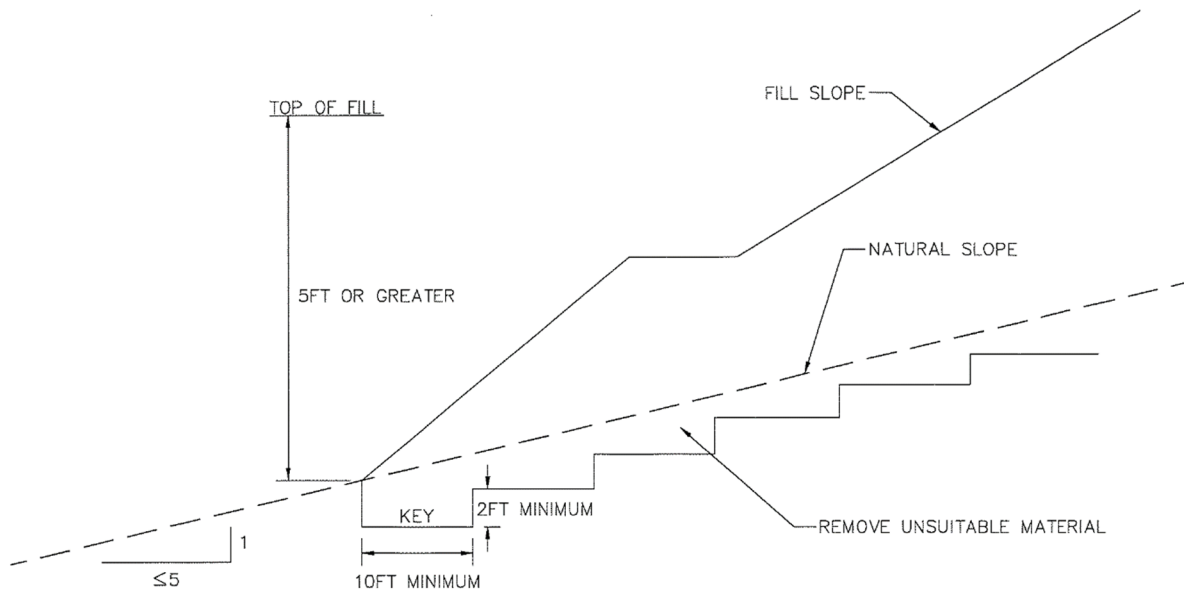
#### **B. Cuts.**

1. Slope. The slope of cut surfaces shall be no greater than 2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (50 percent), unless a soils report justifies a greater slope.
2. Terracing and drainage. Terracing and drainage of cuts shall be provided as required by Subsection D.

#### **C. Fills.**

1. Fill location. Fill shall not be placed on existing slopes greater than 2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (50 percent).
2. Surface preparation. Ground surfaces shall be prepared to receive fill by removing vegetation, topsoil, and other unsuitable materials, and scarifying the ground to provide a bond with the fill material.

3. Benching. Benching into sound bedrock or other competent material, as determined by a civil engineer, shall be required where existing grade is at a slope greater than 5 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (20 percent) and the depth of the fill exceeds 5 feet. Benching shall be provided in accordance with Figure 11-1, subject also to the following requirements:
- A key at least 10 feet in width and 2 feet in depth shall be installed.
  - The key shall be installed at least 1 foot into sound bedrock or other competent material.
  - The area beyond the toe of the fill shall be sloped for sheet overflow or a non-erosive drain shall be provided.
  - Cuts for benching and keys shall be accepted by a soils engineer as a suitable foundation for fill prior to the placement of the fill material.



**Figure 11-1 Benching Details**

4. Fill material. Fill material shall not include organic, frozen, or other deleterious materials. No rock or similar irreducible material greater than 6 inches in any dimension shall be included in fills, except where a soils engineer devises a method of placement of larger rock, continuously inspects its placement, and approves fill stability, subject also to the following requirements:
- Potential rock disposal areas shall be shown on the plans and specifications.

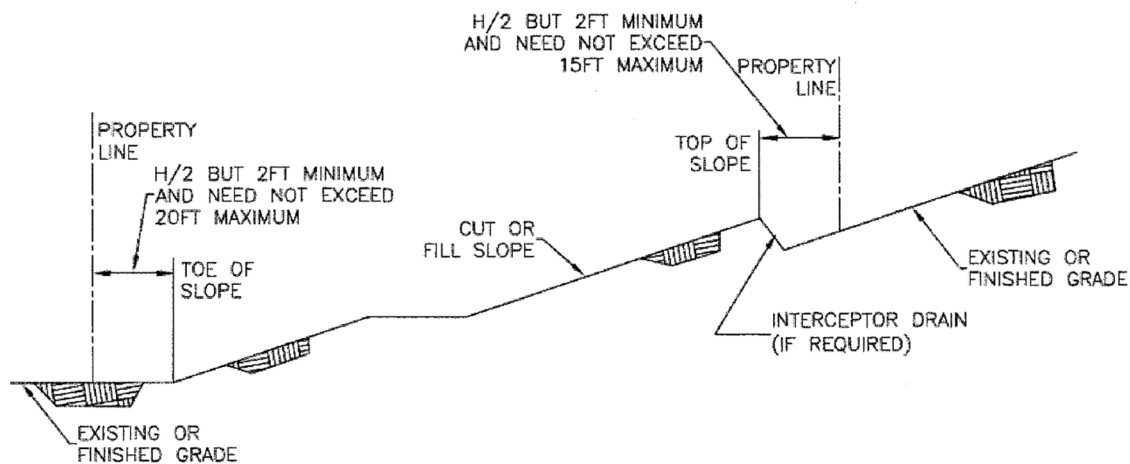
- b. Rocks shall be placed so as to assure filling of all voids with well-graded soil.
  - 5. Fill placement. Fills shall be constructed in lifts not exceeding 8 inches in depth. Completed fills shall be stable, well-integrated, and bonded to adjacent materials and the materials on which they rest. Fills shall be competent to support anticipated loads and be stable at the design slopes shown on the approved plans and specifications.
  - 6. Compaction. Fills shall be compacted to a minimum of 90 percent of maximum dry density, as determined by ASTM D1557, Modified Proctor, or as specified by a soils engineer.
  - 7. Slope. The slope of fill surfaces shall be no greater than 2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (50 percent), unless a soils report justifies a greater slope.
  - 8. Limitation on fill in flood-prone urban area. No fill shall be placed in the flood-prone urban area, unless an analysis of pre-development and proposed post-development site topography demonstrates for no less than the design discharge specified in Section 11.14.040.B that natural and existing off-site drainage patterns will be maintained to the extent feasible and stormwater runoff will be carried to disposal location(s) that have capacity to accommodate the stormwater runoff without worsening existing drainage conditions on the site and adjacent properties.
  - 9. No net fill in special flood hazard areas. No fill shall be placed in any special flood hazard area, unless prior to permit issuance an analysis comparing the pre-development and proposed post-development site topography demonstrates that no reduction in flood storage capacity in the special flood hazard area will result from the fill placement and related improvements, and prior to the permit being finalized an analysis comparing the pre-development and as-built topography confirms that no reduction in flood storage capacity in the special flood hazard area has resulted from the fill placement and related improvements.
  - 10. Terracing and drainage. Terracing and drainage of fills shall be provided as required by Subsection D.
- D. Terracing and drainage of cuts and fills. Terracing and drainage of cuts and fills shall be designed and constructed to ensure the integrity of the cuts and fills. Unless otherwise justified by a soils report, terracing and drainage of cuts and fills with surface slopes greater than 3 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (33 percent) shall comply with the following requirements. Additional requirements applicable to the provision of drainage facilities and systems are established by Section 11.14.040.B.

1. Terraces. Terraces shall be established on cut and fill slopes to control surface drainage and debris. Suitable access shall be provided to permit proper cleaning and maintenance of terraces.
  - a. For cut and fill slopes up to 30 feet in vertical height, terraces need not be provided.
  - b. For cut and fill slopes greater than 30 feet and up to 60 feet in vertical height, one terrace at least 6 feet in width shall be established at mid-height.
  - c. For cut and fill slopes greater than 60 feet and up to 120 feet in vertical height, terraces at least 6 feet in width shall be established at not more than 30-foot intervals or one terrace at least 12 feet in width shall be established at mid-height.
  - d. For cut and fill slopes greater than 120 feet in vertical height, terrace widths and spacing shall be designed by a civil engineer.
2. Terrace drainage.
  - a. Swales or ditches. Swales or ditches shall be provided on terraces, and shall:
    - (1) Have a minimum gradient of 20 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (5 percent);
    - (2) Be paved with reinforced concrete not less than three inches in thickness, or with other materials suitable to the application; and
    - (3) Have a minimum depth of 1 foot and a minimum width of 5 feet.
  - b. Limitation on single run of swale or ditch. A single run of swale or ditch shall not collect runoff from a tributary area exceeding 13,500 square feet (projected) without discharging into a down drain.
3. Subsurface drainage. Cut and fill slopes shall be provided with subsurface drainage as necessary for stability.
4. Building pad drainage. Building pads shall have a drainage gradient of 50 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (2 percent) toward approved drainage facilities.
5. Surface interceptor drains. Surface interceptor drains shall be installed along the top of all cut and fill slopes receiving drainage from a tributary width greater than 40 feet, measured horizontally upslope. The drains shall be paved with reinforced concrete not less than three inches in thickness, or with other materials suitable to

the application. The drains shall be designed in compliance with the Flood Control Design Criteria Manual, or superseding document, for the 100-year design discharge. This surface interceptor drains requirement shall not apply to outslope constructed roadways designed to prevent the concentration of stormwater runoff, provided that the stability of the cut and fill slope is maintained.

E. Setbacks. Cut and fill slopes shall be set back from property lines in compliance with the following requirements. Setback dimensions shall be measured perpendicular to the property line and shall be as shown in Figure 11-2.

1. Top of slope. The setback at the top of a slope shall be not be less than that shown in Figure 11-2, or than is required to accommodate any required surface interceptor drains, whichever is greater.
2. Toe of slope. The setback at the toe of a slope shall not be less than that shown in Figure 11-2.



**Figure 11-2 Cut and Fill Slope Setback Requirements**

F. Protection of footings, buildings, and structures. Footings that may be affected by any excavation shall be underpinned or otherwise protected against settlement and shall be protected against lateral movement. Fills or other surcharge loads shall not be placed adjacent to any building or structure unless the building or structure is capable of withstanding the additional loads caused by the fill or surcharge. The rights of adjacent affected property owners shall be as set forth in Civil Code section 832.

#### **Sec. 11.14.030. - Dams and Reservoirs.**

- A. Dams and reservoirs subject to county jurisdiction. Dams and reservoirs subject to the county's jurisdiction shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the approved plans and specifications and the following requirements:
1. Embankment design. Embankments shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the following requirements:
    - a. Compaction. Embankments shall be compacted to a minimum of 90 percent of maximum dry density, as determined by ASTM D 1557, Modified Proctor.
    - b. Embankment crest. The embankment crest shall have a minimum width of 10 feet, a minimum freeboard of 2 feet and slope toward the dam or reservoir at minimum of 50 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical (2 percent).
  2. Spillways. Dams and reservoirs 6 feet or more in height from existing grade shall have a spillway as an emergency outlet and shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the following requirements:
    - a. Spillway design flood. The spillway design flood shall be in compliance with the Flood Control Design Criteria Manual, or superseding document, for the 100-year design discharge.
    - b. Minimum freeboard. The minimum freeboard (vertical distance from spillway crest to dam or reservoir crest) shall be 2 feet.
    - c. Minimum residual freeboard. The minimum residual freeboard (vertical distance from maximum reservoir stage for spillway design flood to dam or reservoir crest) shall be 1 foot.
    - d. Downstream chute. The downstream chute of the spillway must not be over-topped for the spillway design flood.
    - e. Location. Unless otherwise recommended by a soils engineer, the spillway shall not be located over the dam or reservoir embankment.
    - f. Spillway material. Unless otherwise recommended by a soils engineer, the spillway shall be paved with reinforced concrete not less than six inches in thickness.
  3. Outlets. Reservoirs shall include a low level outlet for emptying or lowering the reservoir in case of emergency and for inspection and maintenance of the dam or reservoir and appurtenances. Outlet conduits shall have an upstream control device (gate or valve), with a trash rack in front of control device, capable of

controlling the discharge through all ranges of flow. Outlet conduits shall be designed for internal pressure equal to the full reservoir head and for superimposed embankment loads, acting separately. A low level outlet need not be provided where the reservoir floor is below grade and a pump capable of emptying or lowering the reservoir in case of emergency or for inspection and maintenance is installed.

- B. Dams and reservoirs subject to state jurisdiction. Dams and reservoirs subject to the state's jurisdiction shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the requirements of the California Division of Safety of Dams and this chapter.

**Sec. 11.14.040. - Drainage.**

- A. Drainage patterns and runoff. Construction grading and drainage shall be designed and constructed to maintain natural and existing drainage patterns. Post-development stormwater runoff shall not exceed pre-development stormwater runoff using the calculation methodologies in the Storm Water Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual, or superseding document, or equivalent calculation methodologies.
- B. Design and construction of drainage facilities and systems.
  - 1. Except as provided in Subsection B.2, drainage facilities and systems shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the Flood Management Design Manual, or superseding document, for no less than the 10-year design discharge.
  - 2. Stream crossings shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the Flood Management Design Manual, or superseding document, for no less than the 100-year design discharge and include a minimum clearance from soffit to design water surface of 1 foot.
  - 3. Drainage facilities required for cuts and fills are also subject to Section 11.14.020.D.
- C. Disposal of stormwater runoff. Drainage facilities and systems shall convey stormwater runoff to disposal locations that maximize infiltration and minimize erosion, and shall dissipate the energy or diffuse the flow prior to releasing the stormwater runoff to any setback area or off the site.
- D. Prevention of soil loss. Drainage facilities and systems shall prevent or minimize soil loss through the use of storm drain culverts (pipes), storm drain inlets and outlets, storm drain outfalls, energy dissipators, flow dispersion, check dams, rolling dips, critical dips, proper location and sizing of culverts, revegetation of exposed or disturbed slopes, minimizing cross drains through road outsloping, minimizing the use of artificial slopes, and other best management practices referenced or detailed in the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage.



#### **Sec. 11.14.050. Protection of Human Remains and Archaeological Resources.**

Where human remains or archaeological resources are discovered during construction grading and drainage, all work shall be halted in the vicinity of the find, the director shall be notified, and the following shall occur before work may be resumed:

- A. Human remains. If human remains or suspected human remains are discovered, the permittee shall notify the county coroner and comply with all state law requirements, including Health and Safety Code section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code section 5097.98, to ensure proper disposition of the human remains or suspected human remains, including those identified to be Native American remains.
- B. Archaeological resources. If archaeological resources or suspected archaeological resources are discovered, the director shall notify the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University, and the permittee shall retain a qualified archeologist to evaluate the find to ensure proper disposition of the archaeological resources or suspected archaeological resources. All costs associated with the evaluation and mitigation of the find shall be the responsibility of the permittee. The director shall provide notice of the find to any tribes that have been identified as having cultural ties and affiliation with the geographic area in which the archaeological resources or suspected archaeological resources were discovered, if the tribe or tribes have requested notice and provided a contact person and current address to which the notice is to be sent. The director may consult with and solicit comments from notified tribes to aid in the evaluation, protection, and proper disposition of the archaeological resources or suspected archaeological resources. The need for confidentiality of information concerning the archaeological resources or suspected archaeological resources shall be recognized by all parties. For the purposes of this section, archaeological resources include historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, pottery, arrowheads, midden, or culturally modified soil deposits. Artifacts associated with prehistoric ruins include humanly modified stone, shell, bone, or other cultural materials such as charcoal, ash, and burned rock indicative of food procurement or processing activities. Prehistoric domestic features include hearths, fire pits, or floor depressions; mortuary features are typically represented by human skeletal remains.

#### **Sec. 11.14.060. Protection of Watercourses.**

Construction grading and drainage within, adjacent to, or involving the alteration of watercourses shall comply with the provisions of Article II (Water Clarity) of Chapter 23 of this code, any necessary state and federal permits, approvals, or authorizations, and the following requirements.

- A. Flood carrying capacity. The flood carrying capacity of any altered or relocated portion of a watercourse shall be maintained.
- B. Obstruction of watercourses. Watercourses shall not be obstructed unless an alternate drainage facility complying with Section 11.14.040.B is installed.

- C. Fills within watercourses. Fills placed within watercourses shall have protection against erosion.
- D. Streams in closed conduits. Except for stream crossings, streams shall not be placed in closed conduits. Stream crossings shall be limited to the minimum width necessary to cross the stream.
- E. Heavy equipment. Heavy equipment shall not cross or disturb stream channels, unless best management practices referenced or detailed in the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage are in place.
- F. Materials storage. Materials that could contribute to pollution shall not be deposited or stored in or adjacent to a watercourse.

**Sec. 11.14.070. - Removal of Trees and Other Vegetation.**

Construction grading and drainage shall not remove or disturb trees and other vegetation except in compliance with the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage and the approved plans and specifications. Construction grading and drainage shall be conducted in compliance with the following requirements.

- A. The limits of the development area shall be clearly identified and delineated on the approved plans and specifications, and defined and marked in the field to prevent damage to surrounding trees and other vegetation.
- B. Trees and other vegetation within the limits of the development area that are to be retained shall be identified and protected from damage by marking, fencing, or other measures.

**Sec. 11.14.080. - Revegetation.**

Construction grading and drainage shall replant disturbed surfaces in compliance with the approved plans and specifications and the following requirements.

- A. Topsoil. Topsoil removed in preparation for construction grading and drainage shall be stored on or near the site and protected to prevent soil loss while the work is underway. Topsoil shall not be stored on top of root systems of trees intended to be preserved. Topsoil shall be restored to disturbed surfaces prior to revegetation.
- B. Methods of revegetation. Mulching, seeding, planting of groundcover, shrubs, or trees, or other suitable stabilization measures shall be used to protect disturbed surfaces to minimize soil loss, and to maximize slope stability. Use of drought-tolerant, fire resistant native plant species is encouraged; use of invasive plant species is prohibited.
- C. Timing of revegetation. Revegetation shall be installed as soon as practical after vegetation removal, but in all cases prior to final inspection.

#### **Sec. 11.14.090. – Setbacks for Lakes, Ponds, and Reservoirs**

Construction grading shall be set back 50 feet from the high water mark of lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, unless a greater setback is required by the general plan, local coastal program, or zoning code. The setback requirements in this section shall not apply to construction grading for construction drainage; trails; public projects; resource conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects; or lake, pond, or reservoir maintenance.

#### **Sec. 11.14.100. - Setbacks for Streams.**

Construction grading shall be set back 25 feet from the top of the higher bank of streams, unless a greater setback is required by the general plan, local coastal program, or zoning code. The setback requirements in this section shall not apply to construction grading for stream crossings and approaches; dams and reservoirs; construction drainage; trails; public projects; resource conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects; or stream bank restoration or stabilization.

#### **Sec. 11.14.110. - Setbacks for Wetlands.**

Construction grading shall be set back from wetlands in compliance with the requirements in Table 11-3, unless:

- A. A greater setback is required by the general plan, local coastal program, or zoning code; or
- B. All necessary state and federal permits, approvals, or authorizations to fill the wetlands have been obtained.

**Table 11-5 - Wetland Setback Requirements**

Type of Wetlands	Setback for Construction Grading
Wetlands designated as Biotic Habitat Areas in the general plan	100 feet from the wetland
All other wetlands	50 feet from the wetland, unless a wetlands report recommends a lesser or greater setback

#### **Sec. 11.14.120. - Soil and other pollutant discharges.**

- A. During the work. Construction grading and drainage shall prevent or control soil and other pollutant discharges during the work through the use of best management practices referenced or detailed in the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage.

- B. During qualifying rain events. Construction grading and drainage shall prevent or control soil and other pollutant discharges during qualifying rain events by implementing stormwater best management practices referenced or detailed in the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage at least 48 hours prior to any qualifying rain event.
- C. Post-development. Construction grading and drainage shall be designed to limit post-development soil and other pollutant discharges to pre-development levels in compliance with the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage.

**Sec. 11.14.130. - Work during the rainy season.**

Construction grading and drainage shall only be permitted during the rainy season when on-site soil conditions permit the work to be performed in compliance with this article and the department's best management practices for construction grading and drainage, and sufficient materials are available on-site to implement the stormwater best management practices required by Section 11.14.120.B, if necessary. The area of erodible land exposed at any one time shall not exceed 1 acre or 20 percent of the site, whichever is greater, and the time of exposure shall be minimized.

**Article 16. – Appeals and Direct Review.**

**Sec. 11.16.010. – Purpose.**

This article establishes procedures for the appeal and review and direct review of certain decisions of the director.

**Sec. 11.16.020. – Appeal and Direct Review Subjects and Jurisdiction.**

Decisions of the director on discretionary permit applications may be appealed to and/or directly reviewed by the board of supervisors. All other decisions of the director under this chapter shall be final, subject only to judicial review.

**Sec. 11.16.030. – Filing and Processing of Appeals.**

- A. Eligibility. An appeal in compliance with this article may be filed by any interested person.
- B. Timing and form of appeal. An appeal shall be submitted in writing and filed with the department on a county appeal form within 10 calendar days following the decision that is the subject of the appeal. The appeal shall specifically state the pertinent facts and the basis for the appeal, and shall be accompanied by the required filing fee.
- C. Effect of filing appeal. The filing of an appeal in compliance with this article shall stay the effective date of the decision that is the subject of the appeal until the board of supervisors has acted upon the appeal.

- D. Report and scheduling of hearing. When an appeal has been filed, the director shall prepare a report on the matter, and schedule the matter for a public hearing by the board of supervisors. The hearing shall be de novo. Notice of the hearing shall be provided, and the hearing shall be conducted, in compliance with Article 18. Any interested person may appear and be heard at the hearing.
- E. Decision. At the hearing on the appeal, the board of supervisors may consider any issue involving the matter that is the subject of the appeal, in addition to the specific grounds for the appeal. After the hearing, the board of supervisors may affirm, affirm in part, modify, or reverse the decision that is the subject of the appeal.
- F. Effective date of appeal decision. A decision by the board of supervisors on an appeal is final and shall be effective on the date of the decision.
- G. Withdrawal of appeal. After filing, an appeal may not be withdrawn except with the consent of the board of supervisors.

**Sec. 11.16.040. – Board Direct Review.**

- A. Request for direct review. Any member of the board of supervisors may request the board of supervisors, upon its own initiative, to review the decision of the director on a discretionary permit application.
- B. Timing and form of request for direct review. A request for direct review shall be made orally at a board of supervisors meeting, or filed in writing or by e-mail with the clerk of the board of supervisors, before the expiration of the appeal period for the decision that is the subject of the request. A request for direct review need not state the reasons for the request. A request for direct review shall not be deemed to be an allegation of any flaw in or a pre-judgment of the decision of the director.
- C. Effect of request for direct review. A request for direct review shall stay the effective date of the decision that is the subject of the request until the board of supervisors takes action in compliance with Subsection D, below, and, if applicable, until the board of supervisors takes action in compliance with Subsection F, below. The stay shall not extend the time for filing an appeal of the decision that is the subject of the request.
- D. Consideration of request for direct review. A request for direct review shall be considered by the board of supervisors at a public meeting.
  - 1. If the board of supervisors approves the request for direct review, the board of supervisors shall assume jurisdiction over the matter and take action in compliance with Subsection F.
  - 2. If the board of supervisors denies the request for direct review, the decision of the director shall stand, unless an appeal of the decision was timely filed in compliance with this article.

- E. Report and scheduling of hearing. When a request for direct review has been approved, the director shall prepare a report on the matter, and schedule the matter for a public hearing by the board of supervisors. The hearing shall be de novo. Notice of the hearing shall be provided, and the hearing conducted, in compliance with Article 18. Any interested person may appear and be heard at the hearing.
- F. Decision. At the hearing on the direct review, the board of supervisors may consider any issue involving the matter that is the subject of the direct review. After the hearing, the board of supervisors may affirm, affirm in part, modify, or reverse the decision of the permit authority that is the subject of the direct review.
- G. Effective date of direct review decision. A decision by the board of supervisors on a direct review is final and shall be effective on the date of the decision.
- H. Participation by initiator of request for direct review. Any member of the board of supervisors who initiates a request for direct review may fully participate in determining whether to approve the request and, if the request is approved, in hearing and deciding upon the matter, including the right to vote, unless actual bias or prejudice is otherwise shown.
- I. Withdrawal of request for direct review. After filing, a request for direct review may not be withdrawn except with the consent of the board of supervisors.

#### **Sec. 11.16.050. - Simultaneous Appeal and Direct Review.**

When the decision of the director on a discretionary permit application is both appealed and jurisdiction is taken by the board of supervisors through direct review, both the appeal and the direct review shall be heard and considered concurrently.

#### **Article 18. - Public Hearings.**

##### **Sec. 11.18.010. – Purpose.**

This article provides procedures for public hearings by the board of supervisors required by this chapter. When a public hearing is required, advance notice of the hearing shall be given, and the hearing shall be conducted, in compliance with this article.

##### **Sec. 11.18.020. - Notice of Hearing.**

When this chapter requires a public hearing by the board of supervisors before a decision on a matter, the public shall be provided notice of the hearing in compliance with Government Code sections 65090, 65091, and 65094, and Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq. The failure of any person or entity to receive notice given pursuant to this section shall not constitute grounds for any court to invalidate the actions of the board of supervisors, provided that there has been substantial compliance with the requirements of this section.

#### **Sec. 11.18.030. - Hearing Procedures.**

- A. Date, time, and place of hearing. A hearing by the board of supervisors shall be held at the date, time, and place for which notice was given.
- B. Continued hearing. Any hearing may be continued from time to time without further notice; provided the chairperson of the board of supervisors announces the date, time, and place to which the hearing will be continued prior to the adjournment or recess of the hearing.
- C. Deferral of final decision. The board of supervisors may announce a tentative decision and defer its action on a final decision until appropriate findings or conditions of approval have been prepared.

#### **Sec. 11.18.040. – Decision.**

The board of supervisors may announce and record its decision on the matter being considered at the conclusion of a scheduled hearing, or may defer action and continue the matter to a later meeting in compliance with Section 11.18.030.

#### **Article 20. - Enforcement.**

#### **Sec. 11.20.010. - Purpose.**

This article establishes provisions that are intended to ensure compliance with the requirements of this chapter and permits issued pursuant to this chapter, and provide for the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of the county.

#### **Sec. 11.20.020. – Decisions in Compliance with Chapter.**

All departments, officials, and employees of the county assigned the authority or duty to issue permits shall comply with the provisions of this chapter.

- A. Permits in conflict with chapter. Permits for activities that would be in conflict with the provisions of this chapter shall not be issued.
- B. Permits deemed void. Any permit for an activity issued in conflict with the provisions of this chapter, or in error, shall be void and of no effect.
- B. County may refuse to issue permits. The county may refuse to issue any permit sought pursuant to this chapter for an activity where the property upon which the activity is proposed is in violation of this code.

#### **Sec. 11.20.030. – Authority for Enforcement.**

- A. Enforcement responsibility. The director shall be responsible for enforcing the provisions of this chapter and permits issued pursuant to this chapter. The director may initiate proceedings to suspend, revoke, or modify permits issued pursuant to this chapter, act as enforcing officer for the purposes of exercising the authority provided in Sections 1-7.1, 1-7.3, and 1-7.6 of this code, and issue correction notices, notices of violation, stop work orders, hazard abatement notices, and citations for any violations of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter.
- B. Authority to inspect. The director is authorized, upon reasonable notice to the property owner or permittee, to enter upon and inspect any property where construction grading or drainage has been or is being performed, to determine whether the work complies with the provisions of this chapter and any applicable permits issued pursuant to this chapter. These inspections may include the taking of photographs, samples, or other physical evidence, and the making of video and/or audio recordings. If the property owner or permittee refuses permission to enter and/or inspect, the county may seek an inspection warrant pursuant to Section 11.20.060.A.

#### **Sec. 11.20.040. – Administrative Enforcement Action.**

Where the director determines that an activity has been or is being performed in violation of the provisions of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter, the director may initiate an administrative enforcement action pursuant to Section 1-7.3 of this code and seek the imposition of civil penalties and costs, including attorney's fees.

#### **Sec. 11.20.050. – Violations.**

- A. Violation of provisions. Any activity performed contrary to the provisions of this chapter shall constitute a violation of this chapter and a public nuisance.
- B. Violation of permit requirement. The violation of any requirement of a permit issued pursuant to this chapter shall constitute a violation of this chapter and a public nuisance.

#### **Sec. 11.20.060. – Legal Remedies.**

The county may undertake any of the following legal actions to correct and/or abate any violation(s) of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter.

- A. Inspection warrants. The county counsel may apply to the court for an inspection warrant to enter upon and inspect property and/or collect samples.
- B. Civil actions. The county counsel may apply to the court for injunctive relief, abatement, civil penalties and costs, and any other remedies available under law.
- C. Criminal actions and penalties.



1. Any person violating or causing the violation of any provision(s) of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punishable in compliance with Section 1-7 of this code.
2. Each and every day during any portion of which any violation(s) of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter is committed, continued, or allowed to continue by the person shall be deemed a separate offense.

D. Citations.

1. Any person violating or causing the violation of any provision(s) of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter may be issued an administrative citation by the director.
2. Any person issued an administrative citation shall be liable for and shall remit payment of any fine(s) assessed in connection with the citation in compliance with Section 1-7.6 of this code.
3. Any person issued an administrative citation may appeal the citation to a hearing officer in compliance with Section 1-7.6 of this code.

**Sec. 11.20.070. – Stop Work Order.**

- A. Issuance of stop work order. Any activity performed in violation of the provisions of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter shall be subject to the issuance of a stop work order.
- B. Violation of stop work order. Any violation of a stop work order shall constitute a misdemeanor and a public nuisance, and shall be subject to the remedies and penalties established by this article and this code.

**Sec. 11.20.080. - Hazard Abatement.**

- A. Issuance of hazard abatement notice. Whenever the director determines that any existing excavation, embankment, or fill on private property has become a hazard to public safety, endangers property, or adversely affects the safety, use, or stability of adjacent property, an overhead or underground utility, or a public way or watercourse, or could adversely affect the water quality of any watercourse or water body, the director shall issue a hazard abatement notice to the owner or other person in control of the property advising of the problem. Upon receipt of the hazard abatement notice, the owner or other person in control of the property shall, within the time specified in the notice, eliminate the hazard and conform to the requirements of this chapter.

- B. Violation of hazard abatement notice. Any violation of a hazard abatement notice shall constitute a violation of this chapter and a public nuisance, and shall be subject to the remedies and penalties authorized by this chapter.

**Sec. 11.20.090. – Suspension or Revocation.**

The director may suspend or revoke a permit issued pursuant to this chapter if the director determines any of the following:

- A. Circumstances under which the permit was issued have changed and the public health, safety, and welfare require the suspension or revocation;
- B. The permit was issued on the basis of inaccurate or incomplete information; or
- C. One or more of the requirements of the permit have not been substantially fulfilled or have been violated.

**Sec. 11.20.100. – Remedies are Cumulative.**

- A. Cumulative, not exclusive. All remedies contained in this chapter for the handling of violations or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter shall be cumulative and in addition to any other remedies available under law.
- B. Other remedies. Should a person be found guilty and convicted of a misdemeanor for the violation of any provision(s) of this chapter or any permit issued pursuant to this chapter, the conviction shall not prevent the county from pursuing any other remedies available under law to correct the violation(s).

**Sec. 11.20.110. – Additional Permit Processing Fees.**

Any person who performs any activity requiring a permit under this chapter without first obtaining the required permit shall pay the permit processing fees required for the correction of the violation(s), and any applicable civil penalties and costs, including attorney's fees, before being granted a permit for the activity.

**Sec. 11.20.120. – Reinspection Fees.**

- A. A reinspection fee shall be imposed on any person who receives a correction notice, notice of violation, or stop work order requiring a follow-up inspection(s).
  - 1. The fee shall not apply to the original inspection to document the violation(s) or to the first scheduled compliance inspection made after the issuance of the correction notice, notice of violation, or stop work order; and
  - 2. The fee shall apply to each subsequent inspection or reinspection conducted when the particular violation for which the inspection or reinspection is scheduled is not

fully abated or corrected as directed by, and within the time and manner specified in, the correction notice, notice of violation, or stop work order.

- B. The reinspection fee is intended to compensate for the actual cost of providing county inspections or reinspections, and is not a penalty for violating this chapter, any permit issued pursuant to this chapter, or this code.
- C. Any reinspection fees imposed shall be separate and apart from any fines or penalties imposed for violation of this chapter, any permit issued pursuant to this chapter, or this code, or costs incurred by the county for the abatement of a public nuisance.

## **Article 22. - Glossary.**

### **Sec. 11.22.010. - Purpose.**

This article provides definitions of terms and phrases used in this chapter that are technical or specialized, or that may not reflect common usage. If any of the definitions in this article conflict with definitions in other provisions of this code, these definitions shall control for the purposes of this chapter. If a word is not defined in this article, or in other provisions of this code, the director shall determine the correct definition.

### **Sec. 11.22.020. - Definitions of Specialized Terms and Phrases.**

As used in this chapter, the following terms and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, unless the context in which they are used clearly requires otherwise. The definition of a term or phrase applies to any of that term's or phrase's variants.

**Agricultural Crop.** Any cultivated crop grown and harvested for commercial purposes.

**Agricultural Drainage.** Any drainage alteration for agricultural purposes. Agricultural drainage does not include drainage alteration for private roads and driveways, dams, reservoirs, lakes, ponds, and structures. Agricultural drainage is regulated under Chapter 36 of this code.

**Agricultural Grading.** Any grading for agricultural purposes. Agricultural grading does not include grading for private roads and driveways, dams, reservoirs, lakes, ponds, and structures. Agricultural grading is regulated under Chapter 36 of this code.

**Agricultural Purpose.** See agriculture.

**Agriculture.** The production of food, fiber, plant materials, and the raising and maintaining of horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock and farm animals.

**Approved Plans and Specifications.** Plans and specifications, including reports, material lists, estimates, maintenance agreements, and professional recommendations, approved by the director pursuant to this chapter.

**Architect.** A person licensed by the state to practice architecture.

**As-Built Plans.** Plans or drawings that depict the final installed configuration of construction grading or drainage (whether physical or functional). The plans or drawings shall indicate any construction deviations and show all features as actually built. The plans or drawings are intended to provide a permanent record of as-built conditions and aid as key references for future maintenance processes.

**Bench.** A relatively level step excavated into earth material on which fill is to be placed.

**Best Management Practice.** A program, technology, process, siting criteria, operational method, or engineered system which when implemented prevents, controls, removes, or reduces pollution or other adverse environmental effects.

**Building Permit.** See Section 7-5 of this code.

**California Division of Safety of Dams.** The Division of Safety of Dams in the California Department of Water Resources.

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).** Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.

**Civil Engineer.** A person licensed by the state to practice civil engineering.

**Compaction.** The densification of a fill by mechanical means.

**Construction Drainage.** Any drainage alteration, except for drainage alteration undertaken as part of agricultural drainage.

**Construction Drainage Permit.** See Section 11.06.010.

**Construction Grading.** Any grading, except for agricultural grading.

**Construction Grading Permit.** See Section 11.04.010.

**County Land Use Approval.** A discretionary permit or approval granted by the county pursuant to Chapter 25, 26, or 26C of this code.

**Cut.** See excavation.

**Dam.** Any artificial barrier, together with appurtenant works, which does or may impound or divert water.

**Demolition Permit.** See Section 7-5 of this code.

**Department.** The Permit and Resource Management Department of the county (Permit Sonoma).

**Department's Best Management Practices for Construction Grading and Drainage.** The best management practices adopted or amended by the director pursuant to Section 11.02.060.

**Design Discharge.** See the Flood Management Design Manual.

**Development Area.** All areas subject to ground disturbance related to construction grading or drainage, including the grading or drainage alteration area, staging areas for vehicles, supplies, and equipment, and material storage areas.

**Director.** The director of the department or his or her authorized representative.

**Discretionary Permit Application.** A permit application for construction grading or drainage that includes a request pursuant to Section 11.08.030.D for relief from the standards in Article 14.

**Down Drain.** A device for collecting water from a swale or ditch located on or above a slope, and safely delivering it to an approved drainage facility.

**Drainage.** Refers to the collection, conveyance, containment, and/or discharge of stormwater runoff.

**Drainage Alteration.** Construction or modification of any drainage facility or system.

**Drainage Alteration Area.** The area subject to construction drainage.

**Drainage Facility.** A constructed component of a drainage system.

**Drainage System.** Constructed and/or natural features that work together to collect, convey, channel, hold, inhibit, retain, detain, infiltrate, divert, treat, or filter stormwater runoff, including detention and retention basins, overland flow paths, pipes, channels, and the inlets and outlets to these features.

**Driveway.** A vehicular access that serves no more than two residential buildings, containing no more than three dwelling units, and any number of accessory buildings on a single parcel.

**Earth Material.** Any rock or natural soil or combination thereof.

**Embankment.** A fill consisting of a deposit of soil, rock, or other materials mechanically placed.

**Encroachment Permit.** See Section 15-8 of this code.

**Erosion.** The process by which soil particles are detached and transported by the actions of wind, water, or gravity.

**Excavation.** The removal of earth material by artificial means, also referred to as a cut.

**Existing Grade.** The grade prior to construction grading.

**Existing Slope.** The slope prior to construction grading.

**Fill.** The deposition of earth material by artificial means. Fill does not include soil amendment and fertilizing materials.

**Finished Grade.** The grade at the conclusion of all construction grading efforts.

**Flood Management Design Manual.** The Flood Management Design Manual, Sonoma County Water Agency, latest edition.

**Flood-Prone Urban Area.** The area within the boundaries defined on the north by River Road; on the west by the easterly boundary of the Laguna de Santa Rosa to its intersection with Highway 12 and continuing with the easterly limit of the city of Sebastopol to Highway 116; on the south by Highway 116 to its intersection with Old Redwood Highway then south to East Cotati Avenue and east to its intersection with Petaluma Hill Road; and on the east by Petaluma Hill Road, north to Highway 12 then west to Highway 101 and north to River Road.

**General Plan.** The Sonoma County General Plan.

**Geologic Hazard.** Slope instability, landsliding, fault displacement, liquefaction, flooding, subsidence, differential settlement, expansive soil, creeping soil, or other similar geologic condition, either mapped or observed in the field.

**Geotechnical Engineer.** A civil engineer licensed by the state to practice geotechnical engineering.

**Geotechnical Report.** A soils report prepared by a geotechnical engineer.

**Grade.** The vertical location of the ground surface.

**Grading.** An excavation or fill or combination thereof. Grading does not include routine farming practices, such as soil preparation, planting, seeding, and other similar activities.

**Grading Area.** The area subject to construction grading.

**Ground Disturbance.** Any activity that disturbs or compacts the ground.

**Invasive Plant Species.** A plant species that has a rating of moderate or higher level of invasiveness on the most recent California Invasive Plant Council Invasive Plant Inventory. Examples of invasive plants include Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), giant reed (*Arundo donax*), salt cedar (*Tamarix sp.*) and star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*).

**Key.** A compacted fill placed in a trench excavated in earth material beneath the toe of a slope.

**Lake.** A permanent natural body of water, or an artificially impounded body of water, isolated from the sea, with at least one acre of open water of sufficient depth and permanency to prevent complete coverage by rooted aquatic plants.

**Land Clearing.** The removal of trees, stumps, brush, rocks, and other obstacles from an area.

**Landscape Architect.** An individual licensed by the state to practice landscape architecture and to use the title, landscape architect.

**Licensed Professional.** An architect, civil engineer, landscape architect, professional forester, or professional geologist.

**Listed Species.** Any plant or animal species protected by the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.) or the state Fish and Game Code.

**Local Coastal Program.** The Sonoma County Local Coastal Program.

**Ministerial Permit Application.** A permit application that does not include a request pursuant to Section 11.08.030.D for relief from the standards in Article 14.

**MS4 Permit.** A Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.

**Permit Application.** An application for a permit required by this chapter.

**Permit Holder.** The property owner or an easement holder. See Section 11.10.020.C.

**Permittee.** The permit holder or an authorized agent of the permit holder.

**Person.** Any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, joint stock association; city, county, state, or district; tribe; and includes any trustee, receiver, assignee, or other similar representative thereof.

**Pit.** An earthen excavation designed to store water.

**Pond.** A body of still freshwater smaller than a lake, often artificially impounded.

**Private Road.** Any way or place in private ownership that provides vehicular access to more than one parcel, to a commercial building or agricultural operation on a single parcel, or to more than two residential buildings or two residential buildings, containing more than three dwelling units, on a single parcel.

**Professional Biologist.** A person possessing academic and professional experience in biological sciences and related resource management activities who is able to identify biotic resources and can recognize and is familiar with the habitats and behaviors of listed species that may be present

in the county. The person must have specialized skills and training and any required licenses/permits/certifications specific to the study being conducted.

**Professional Forester.** A person licensed by the state to practice forestry.

**Professional Geologist.** A person licensed by the state to practice geology.

**Public Agency.** Any state or federal agency, any city, county, or special district.

**Qualifying Rain Event.** Any weather pattern that is forecasted by the National Weather Service to have a 50 percent or greater chance of producing 0.5 inches or more precipitation on a site within a 48 hour or greater period between rain events.

**Rain Event.** Any weather pattern producing precipitation.

**Rainy Season.** The period of the year during which there is a substantial chance of precipitation. For the purposes of this chapter, the rainy season is defined as starting on October 1 and ending on April 30.

**Registered Environmental Health Specialist.** A person licensed by the state to practice as an environmental health specialist.

**Reservoir.** A water storage structure made by constructing a dam, embankment, or pit with an impermeable liner such as clay or synthetic material.

**Septic Permit.** See Section 24-7 of this code.

**Setback Area.** The area within a setback required by Section 11.14.090, 11.14.100, or 11.14.110.

**Site.** All or part(s) of a parcel or adjoining parcels where construction grading or drainage subject to the provisions of this chapter is performed or permitted.

**Slope.** An inclined surface, the inclination of which is expressed as a ratio of horizontal distance to vertical distance (e.g., 2:1) or as a percentage (e.g., 50 percent). Slope shall be calculated using a method acceptable to the director.

**Soil Amendment and Fertilizing Materials.** Organic and in-organic substances applied to the existing soil to improve physical properties of the soil or increase available nutrients in the soil. Soil amendment and fertilizing materials include commercial fertilizers, agricultural minerals such as gypsum and lime, pumice, straw, and manure.

**Soil Loss.** The wearing away of the ground surface as a result of the movement of wind, water, or ice.



**Soil Preparation.** Deep ripping, chisel plowing, field cultivating, disking, plowing, harrowing, cultipacking, rototilling, application of soil amendment and fertilizing materials, and other similar activities.

**Soils Engineer.** A civil engineer experienced in the practice of soils engineering.

**Soils Report.** A report prepared by a soils engineer that contains not less than the following:

1. The nature and distribution of existing soils.
2. Conclusions and recommendations for grading procedures.
3. Soil design criteria for any structures or embankments required to accomplish the proposed grading.
4. Where necessary, slope stability studies, and recommendations and conclusions regarding site geology.

**Special Flood Hazard Area.** Any area designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as subject to flooding by the 1 percent annual chance flood (100-year flood).

**Spillway.** An open channel conveyance for the passage of surplus water.

**State CEQA Guidelines.** California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15000 et seq.

**Stormwater Runoff.** Surface runoff generated by a rain event.

**Storm Water Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual.** The Storm Water Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual, City of Santa Rosa and County of Sonoma, latest edition.

**Stream.** Any natural or modified channel with bed and banks containing flowing water or showing evidence of having contained flowing water, such as deposit of rock, sand, gravel, or soil. Stream includes creeks and rivers.

**Surface Runoff.** Any water that flows over the land surface.

**Terrace.** A relatively level step constructed in the face of a graded slope for drainage and maintenance purposes.

**Timber Operations.** See Public Resources Code section 4527.

**Tribe.** A California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission.

**Vegetation.** All natural, non-cultivated plant life, including the root system, stem, trunk, crown, branches, leaves, and blades.

**Vegetation Removal.** The cutting, breaking, burning, or uprooting of vegetation, the application of herbicide to vegetation, the covering over of vegetation with earth, or the compacting of the soil under and around vegetation. Vegetation removal does not include removal of invasive plant species.

**Watercourse.** Any stream, or any artificial channel constructed to facilitate the use of water or convey stormwater runoff.

**Well Permit.** See Section 25B-5 of this code.

**Wetland.** Those areas that meet either the federal definition of wetlands, as set forth in 33 CFR § 328.3, as that section may be amended from time to time, or the state of California definition of wetland as adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board as a State Wetland Definition, as that definition may be amended from time to time. In the event of a conflict between the federal and state definitions, whichever definition is more protective shall control.

**Wetlands Report.** A report prepared by a professional biologist in compliance with department guidelines to identify and evaluate wetlands present on a site.

**Zoning Code.** Chapters 26 and 26C of this code.