



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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Attorney General Files Complaint Against North Coast Railroad Authority

BERKELEY--- The California Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) today announced that the California Attorney General's Office in Oakland has filed a multi-count complaint against the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) in Mendocino County on a variety of state environmental violations.

The complaint, filed in Mendocino County District Court was on behalf of three State agencies; The Department of Fish and Game (DFG), the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). If convicted, NCRA could face fines up to \$25,000 per day, per violation.

"The issuance of this complaint is an example of a coordinated effort of the state's environmental regulators to protect California's waterways by enforcing laws regarding the disposal of hazardous wastes," said Jesse R. Huff, DTSC Director.

"All facilities, including the Railroad, need to comply with water quality laws to protect the Eel River and the threatened coho salmon," said Lee Michlin, Executive Officer for NCRWQCB.

The complaint states that NCRA repeatedly spilled used oil and waste fuel onto the ground and into the Eel River, and illegally altered the stream bed of the river in several locations. The Eel River is designated as a wild and scenic river, pursuant to the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and is habitat for coho salmon and steel head trout.

In addition, NCRA is charged with illegally storing and disposing of used oil, used oil filters, locomotive batteries, and other hazardous waste without safe storage practices and without the appropriate permits. The Railroad also dumped waste oil and fuel into a ditch which flows into a nearby creek.

DTSC, DFG, and the Regional Board are seeking relief from the court to require NCRA to operate according to existing environmental law.

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DTSC is one of the six boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency.